

Gettysburg Stories

BY

BRIAN WALRATH

THE FIRST DAY OF THE BATTLE

(SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 3 OF THE SLIDE PRESENTATION SERIES)

BATTLEFIELD CHANGES

The vegetation at Gettysburg has changed significantly over the years. In 1863, at least 38 orchards dotted the area that would become the battlefield. No wonder the Rebels were impressed with the bounty that awaited them when they crossed into Pennsylvania (and no wonder many of their digestive systems were upset by the unaccustomed consumption of so much fresh fruit – including, perhaps, Robert E. Lee, who according to at least one account, suffered the effects of too many cherries). The only orchards still there are the famous Peach Orchard, one near the Bliss farm, plus a couple of small ornamental plots on Cemetery Hill.

Today, there are 600 acres of woods that had been cleared land in 1863. This is due to the natural intrusion of vegetation plus the lack of grazing animals, which kept fields clear in the old days. This is especially noticeable in the areas around and west of Devil’s Den and north of Little Round Top. Cemetery Hill, now covered with beautiful giant trees, was an almost barren knoll with a just a few stunted trees and shrubs. Another 150 acres were wooded then but are clear now. All in all, visibility was generally better at the time of the battle than it is now, with the exception, of course, of the thick gun smoke that so obscured the field that opposing soldiers were often invisible to each other. The National Park Service, with the help of volunteers, is working busily to clear some areas and reforest others so the battlefield will be closer to its old appearance, but this is a never-ending struggle.

A network of roads now runs over the battlefield. While some follow the routes of roads or country lanes that existed during the battle, many more were built since to accommodate tourists. As one would expect, this is most noticeable in the areas of the heaviest fighting. On Little Round Top, for example, at the time of the battle there was a single primitive logging road up the eastern side of the hill reaching almost to the summit. A post-battle road was built running over the top from south to north. The road was eventually straightened and widened and parking areas and asphalt foot paths were added. All this construction required the removal of a number of boulders, severely altering the landscape. While the general feel of the landscape is similar to what it was during the battle, many details have been lost.

The same is true in Devil’s Den, the “rocky hill” west of the Wheatfield, on Culp’s Hill and at many other places. Farming, tank maneuvers during WWI, the building of the tent city for the 50th Reunion, and the construction of railroad tracks has changed the ground over which Pickett’s Charge passed, flattening the field from its original undulating condition.

All in all, it is difficult today to appreciate the challenges of moving bodies of troops and artillery batteries around the battlefield.

MONUMENTS AND MARKERS

At latest count, the Gettysburg Battlefield is peppered with more than 950 monuments and markers (plus hundreds of small regimental flank markers), 410 cannon, and 148 historic buildings. Most of the monuments are, understandably, Union. After all, this was a Union victory on Union soil, and the Gettysburg Battlefield Monuments Commission was not receptive to Confederate monuments until decades after the war. Plus, the South was financially broke, and there was no money for luxuries like monuments to a lost cause.

The monuments and markers commemorate people, units, places, and events. Many, perhaps most, of the monuments are for specific regiments or artillery batteries, and were paid for by the men of those units and their friends. These unit monuments range from simple stone slabs to elaborate stone carvings or bronze statues.

The monument to the 44th New York is the largest regimental monument on the battlefield. This castle-like edifice towers 44 feet tall on the summit of Little Round Top.

Pennsylvania has the biggest state monument at 69 feet tall. Its tablets list the name of over 34,000 Pennsylvania soldiers who were present at the battle.



Pennsylvania Monument

EQUESTRIAN STATUES

There are seven equestrian statues at Gettysburg. All of them are of infantry commanders. The statue of the most prominent cavalry commander, John Buford, portrays him on foot; the same is true of Major William Wells, the only other cavalry officer with a statue. Perhaps more money could be raised for the monuments to infantry officers – horse statues require a lot of bronze.

There is still disagreement over the significance of the placement of the horse's feet in an equestrian statue. Some believe that there is an unwritten rule among sculptors that two hooves off the ground indicates that the rider was killed in the battle, while one raised hoof means he was wounded. Others call this a myth. Noted Civil War historian James McPherson supports the position that it is not a myth. He even states that the sculptor of the recently installed statue of James Longstreet had to get permission from the National Park Service to portray the horse with one foot raised, even though Longstreet was not wounded at Gettysburg.



General John Reynolds Statue

At any rate, the equestrian statue of General John Reynolds, killed early in the first day's fighting, is considered an engineering marvel. Horse and rider weigh nine thousand pounds and are perfectly balanced on just two hooves.

JOHN BURNS

One of the great stories to emerge from the Battle of Gettysburg was that of John Burns. Burns was a town character, a 70-year-old veteran of the war of 1812, variously described as cantankerous, highly opinionated and aggressively patriotic. He had served for many years as a town constable at a time when "constables were chosen on the principal of giving the job to a man that had nothing else to do and who, having once been an active member of the community, ought in some way to be provide for." He had also been the target of many practical jokes and pranks, especially by the town boys.

The Rebels had first passed through Gettysburg in late June, undoubtedly stirring up the old veteran's ire. When they reappeared in force and the battle began on the morning of July 1st, he could no longer sit and do nothing. He picked up his old flintlock and powder horn and headed toward the front to join the fray, berating his one-eyed neighbor for not grabbing a rifle and joining him. There may have been a handful of other civilians who took part in the fighting, but most of their stories are not well documented. Burns' is.

On McPherson Ridge Burns approached an officer of a Pennsylvania Bucktail regiment and requested that he be allowed to fall in with the officer's command. Not quite believing his eyes nor ears, the officer sent the aged Burns into the woods next to the McPherson Farm, where he fought beside members of the Iron Brigade throughout the afternoon until he was wounded three times. He was left behind by the Union retreat and spent the night lying in a field. Injured and exhausted, the old man made his way through groups of victorious Confederates who, bemused by the old fellow, allowed him to go home unmolested.



John Burns statue

John Burns survived his wounds and became a national hero, celebrated in story and song. Such was his fame that when Abraham Lincoln arrived in November for the dedication of the Soldiers National Cemetery, he specifically requested to meet John Burns. The President and the old hero attended church services together.

Burns died in 1872 and is buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Gettysburg. Veterans of the battle felt that something should be done to honor the old vet, and in 1903 a statue of Burns in fighting gear was dedicated where he stood with the Union to face the Confederate attack. Although the statue depicts him with a flintlock, in reality he used a rifled musket borrowed from a wounded

Union soldier. The old man was not so stuck in his ways that he declined to take advantage of up-to-date weaponry.

So what makes the story of John Burns so special? Did the people of Gettysburg rise up to meet the invasion of their state and their town? No. Many tended the wounded, some baked bread for the soldiers, but most of them wisely fled or hid and let the soldiers carry the battle. But this would not do for the old man who was pushed to his limit. Instead, this town crank, this butt of many jokes, this veteran of a war fought before most of the townsfolk and soldiers had even been born did the rare thing – he shouldered his rifle and advanced toward the sound of the guns.

“SALLIE”

A number of the Gettysburg monuments bear statues or carved likenesses of a particular soldier whose actions at the battle merit special notice. A few, like the John Burns statue, honor civilians. There is one monument, however, that bears the likeness of a participant in the battle who was neither a soldier nor a civilian.

Where Oak Ridge slopes down toward the northwest side of Gettysburg runs Doubleday Avenue. Of course, there was no Doubleday Avenue during the battle, just a low stone wall to separate pasture, orchard and fields of wheat. Along this stone wall, facing west toward the advancing confederates was deployed a brigade made up of regiments from Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania. Today, lined up much as the regiments were on July 1, 1863, stand monuments to each of the regiments. One of these monuments commemorates the 11th Pennsylvania, whose men helped hold this position until they were overwhelmed and ordered to fall back through the town.

Atop the 11th Pennsylvania monument stands the bronze statue of a Union soldier, his musket at the ready. The soldier faces to the west, away from Doubleday Avenue. Most battlefield visitors do not bother to stop and walk around to the front of the monument; after all, they are probably a little footsore by now and have seen plenty of monuments. This is a shame, for they will miss gazing into the very determined face of the Yank as he prepares for the Rebel attack which is coming. The visitor will also miss something else, something which makes this monument stand apart from others on the battlefield.

At the base of the monument, curled up beneath the soldier's feet, is a bronze statue of a small, nondescript dog. This is Sallie, the mascot of the 11th Pennsylvania. As a puppy, Sallie had been given to the regiment early in the war, and she had shared all the hardships with the men since then. She was present at all their battles, taking her



Sallie near base of monument

position at the end of the line of battle, barking loudly at the enemy. She was a friendly mutt, but was known to hate three things: “Rebels, Democrats and Women!”

At Gettysburg she once again accompanied the troops as they tried to hold off the Confederate attack. During the confused retreat through town no one noticed at first that Sallie was missing. By the time the regiment reformed, it was apparent to all that their little comrade was not with them.

After the battle’s end, some men from the 11th Pennsylvania ventured north of town in search of Sallie. They found her, weak from hunger but alive, still lying among her dead comrades on Oak Ridge, faithfully guarding their bodies.

Sallie was nursed back to health and, like many of the wounded, rejoined the regiment and served for almost two more years. A soldier to the end, she was shot and killed while going into battle at Hatcher’s Run, Virginia in February 1865. Had she lived just a couple of more months, she would have survived the war. The men of the regiment buried her on the field despite being under heavy enemy fire.

But Sallie would not be forgotten by the men with whom she had shared so much. When the regimental monument was designed the survivors insisted that it include their faithful comrade. There she lies today, at her master’s feet, forever ready to answer the call to form ranks.

BEN CRIPPEN

It was a great honor for a Civil War soldier to be chosen as a color bearer. These were the men who carried the regimental and national flags. On parade, they led the ranks, both identifying the regiment and guiding the way. In battle, they performed much the same roles, but under infinitely different circumstances.

Because they drew the fire of the enemy, the men who carried the colors often had short life spans. Civil War battles are replete with incidents of color bearers being shot down, only to have the flag scooped up by another soldier, who in turn was felled. This might be repeated half a dozen times during a single engagement. A dangerous job, indeed.

There are a number of monuments at Gettysburg that include the likenesses of regimental color bearers. So moved were the surviving members of these regiments by the courage of their color bearer that they chose to feature him when the time came to design their monuments. One in particular stands out for the pose in which the color bearer is depicted.

On the afternoon of the first day of the battle, the Union troops on McPherson Ridge were being hard pressed by the attacking Confederates. They had bravely held for several hours against the increasing tide of Rebels who were starting to flank the Union lines, but now word came that it was time to fall back to Seminary Ridge.

Not all the Yanks were pleased with this order. Near the McPherson farm Sergeant Ben Crippen, the color bearer of the 143rd Pennsylvania, followed the order to withdraw. But rather than simply skedaddle, he periodically turned and shook his fist at the advancing enemy. The flag fluttering above his head, his 6' 1" stature, and his challenging gesture eventually attracted the fire of Confederates. Confederate General A. P. Hill, commanding the III Corps that was attacking the Federals, saw Crippen fall. According to Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Freemantle of Britain's Coldstream Guards, who was an observer traveling with the Army of Northern Virginia, "General Hill was sorry when he met his fate."



Ben Crippen appears on the 143rd PA Infantry monument

Crippen's body was engulfed by the Rebel flood sweeping over McPherson's Ridge and the flag he bore was undoubtedly snatched up as a trophy. His body was never identified and he likely lies today among the unknowns in Gettysburg's Soldiers National Cemetery.

But the comrades who witnessed Crippen's gutsy act did not forget him. They chose a likeness of the obstinate Crippen shaking his fist to adorn their regimental monument, which stands near the spot where they last saw him, defiant to the end.

"THE CHILDREN OF THE BATTLEFIELD"

When the Union line north and west of Gettysburg finally collapsed on the afternoon of the first day's fighting, a sea of blue uniforms began flowing south through town toward Cemetery Hill. Hot on their heels was a seemingly unstoppable Confederate army bent on shooting down or capturing every Federal in sight.

In a drastic bid to slow the Rebel advance, a brigade under Colonel Charles Coster was ordered to move down the northern slope of Cemetery Hill and take on the Rebels. As Union soldiers fled past them toward safety, Coster's men moved north through the streets until they arrived at Kuhn's brickyard on the outskirts of town. Coster deployed his three regiments east of Stratton Street. In the center of the formation was the 154th New York, and in the 154th New York was a sergeant named Amos Humiston.

Born in a small town in the remote reaches of New York state, Amos originally apprenticed to be a harness maker. Seeking adventure, he signed on with a whaler out of New Bedford, Massachusetts. A single three-and-half-year voyage was enough for Amos, and when his ship arrived back in New Bedford, he returned home, got married, fathered three children, and opened a harness shop in Portville, New York.

When war broke out in April 1861, Amos was anxious to enlist, but his duties to family held him back. When President Lincoln called for 300,000 three-year volunteers in July 1862, Amos could no longer resist, and he was one of the first men from Portville to answer the call. The patriotic pull must have been strong in Amos, since at 32 he was 6 years older than the average Union soldier, plus he had three small children at home.

Amos tried to be diligent in writing regularly to his wife, Philinda, and his letters expressed a mixture of homesickness, love for his wife and children, and commitment to do his duty. Amos' unit did not see much action until the spring of 1863. However, his life was threatened on two occasions by serious bouts of fever and diarrhea. Nevertheless, Amos performed well enough to be promoted to sergeant.

In May 1863, Amos' regiment took fearful losses at Chancellorsville. Not long after, Amos received a present from Philinda. It was a simple gift, but one that was destined to become famous – an ambrotype of their three children. He wrote to his wife, "I got the likeness of the children and it pleased me more than eney thing that you could have sent to me. How I want to se them and their mother is more than I can tell I hope that we may all live to see each other again if this war dose not last to long." The war would not last much longer for Amos. In June he marched north with the Army of the Potomac, dogging Robert E. Lee's foray into Pennsylvania.



The Humiston Children.

July 1st found him stationed with his regiment in Kuhn's brickyard on the north side of Gettysburg, as the war swirled about him. The outnumbered Union troops stood as long as they could, but finally the thin line crumbled and fled and Amos fled with them. He made it a few blocks south to the corner of Hanover and Stratton streets.

We don't know the circumstance of Amos' death. Did he die bravely, turning to take one last shot at the advancing enemy? Or was he struck down fleeing in desperation? We'll never know, and it doesn't really matter. For Amos was destined to become famous, not for fighting but for dying.

After the Confederate withdrawal, a girl found Amos' body. Clutched in his stiff fingers was a picture – a picture of three small children, a girl and two boys. He must have pulled it from his pocket so he could gaze upon their faces before he breathed his last. The picture bore no names and Amos' body had no identification. An anonymous soldier destined to be buried with the unknowns.

The girl gave the picture to her father, who operated a tavern about a dozen miles west of Gettysburg. He posted it behind the bar for all to see.

Volunteers were pouring into Gettysburg to help the wounded, and by sheer happenstance a wagon carrying four men broke down near the tavern. One of the men was a Philadelphia physician named John Francis Bourns. Visiting the tavern, he saw the ambrotype and heard the story of how and where it had been found. Intrigued, he talked the tavern owner into relinquishing the picture and set out to try to identify its owner.

When he got to Gettysburg, he found the soldier's grave and ensured that it was well marked. Returning to Philadelphia, he set forth on his quest to track down the fallen man's identity. He had local photographers produce hundreds of duplicates of the picture. Then he contacted a number of newspapers to spread the story of "the children of the battlefield." Although newspapers of the day could not reproduce photographs, they described the unknown soldier's ambrotype in enough detail that a reader might be able to recognize the children. The story included Dr. Bourn's address and asked interested parties to contact him.

In Portville, New York, Mrs. Philinda Humiston waited and worried. She had not heard from her husband Amos in some time. She knew there had been a great battle at Gettysburg and that her husband's regiment had been there. Was he alive and unscathed, or captured, wounded, missing, killed? No word came.

In early November, a resident of Portville shared with his townsfolk a single copy of *The American Presbyterian*, a Philadelphia religious journal which contained a story titled "Whose Father Was He?" The copy came into the hands of Philinda Humiston, who recognized the description of the picture.

Dr. Bourn had received many letters from people who thought they might know the children in the picture, and he sent each of them a copy. But nothing came from it. When a letter from Philinda Humiston arrived, he dutifully mailed her a picture, but had no reason to believe that this was any different from the other inquiries. When Philinda received Dr. Bourn's letter, she knew her questions had been answered and her worst fears had been realized. Gazing back at her were the cherubic faces of her little Franklin, Alice and Frederick.

The American Presbyterian broke the news in an article published on November 19, the same day that Abraham Lincoln delivered his famous address at the Soldiers National Cemetery in Gettysburg.

The Humiston story does not end there. Impressed by the national outpouring of sympathy stirred up by his campaign to identify the father of the "children of the battlefield," Dr. Bourns set out on a second campaign to raise funds for an orphanage in Gettysburg for children of Union soldiers who had been killed in the battle. Donations came from all over the country and in October 1866 the orphanage opened with 22 children. At Dr. Bourns' request, Philinda Humiston

moved there with her three children and helped run the home. But Gettysburg did not agree with Philinda, and in 1869 she remarried and moved to Massachusetts.

The orphanage grew to almost 100 children, but in a sad turn of events, it closed a dozen years after opening, plagued with charges of child abuse and embezzlement by Dr. Bourns.

Amos Humiston is not interred with the unknowns. He rests today in Grave 14, Row B of the New York section of the Soldiers National Cemetery. In 1993 a group of concerned Gettysburg and Portville citizens, with help from descendants of the members of the 154th New York, erected a monument featuring likenesses of Amos and his three children near the spot where his body was found.



The Children of the Battlefield memorial

Amos Humiston is famous today because through a series of coincidences and the persistence of one man, the poignant story of the “children of the battlefield” attained national attention. But we might want to remember Sergeant Humiston not just as one of the anonymous fallen whose identity was finally revealed. In a larger sense, perhaps we should think of him as a representative of the thousands of unknown Gettysburg soldiers who deserve to be honored not for any particular heroics on the battlefield, but for giving, in Lincoln’s words, the “last full measure of devotion” for the cause they believed in.

THE UNFORTUNATE DEATH OF JOHN BUFORD

Union Brigadier General John Buford, whose cavalry troopers so masterfully delayed the Confederate army on the first day at Gettysburg, was recognized as one of the best cavalry commanders of the war. His family was originally from Virginia and he was born in Kentucky. When he was eight, his family moved to Illinois, where his father was a prominent Democratic politician and an opponent of Abraham Lincoln. Buford graduated from West Point in 1848 and was serving in the army when hostilities between North and South broke out. His cousin became a cavalry brigadier general in the Confederate Army. General John Gibbon, who commanded the Union division at the Angle during Pickett’s Charge, tells in his memoirs of the night in 1861 when Buford decided to stay with the Union:



John Buford

“One night after the arrival of the mail we were in his room, when Buford said in his slow and deliberate way ‘I got a letter from the Governor of Kentucky. He sent me word to come to Kentucky at once and I shall have anything I want.’ With a good deal of anxiety, I asked ‘What did you answer, John?’ and my relief was great when he replied ‘I sent him word I was a Captain in the United States Army and I intended to remain one!’”

Gibbon, also a West Pointer, was from North Carolina but, like his friend Buford, opted to serve the Union.

Unfortunately, John Buford would not live to see the end of the conflict. Late in 1863 he became ill, from what is believed to be typhoid. He died on December 16, 1863. It was a loss to the army to which he had remained faithful. His final words were reported to be, "Put guards on all the roads, and don't let the men run to the rear."

ELIZABETH THORN

The most famous female connected with Gettysburg has to be Jennie Wade, the only civilian known to have been killed during the battle. Jennie had the misfortune of being struck by a stray bullet while she was baking bread in the kitchen of her sister’s house on Baltimore Street, near the base of Cemetery Hill. While today Jennie is well-known for being in the wrong place at the wrong time, others whose contributions were greater have not achieved such popularity. Among them is Elizabeth Thorn. Elizabeth and her husband, Peter, emigrated from Germany to Pennsylvania, where Peter became the caretaker of Gettysburg’s Evergreen Cemetery. They lived in the now-famous gatehouse, along with their three children and her parents. In 1862, Peter enlisted in the Union army, and Elizabeth was left to manage the cemetery and raise their children.



Evergreen Cemetery Gatehouse after the battle.

When the war came to Gettysburg, Elizabeth’s life changed even more. She left this account of the first of July:

“I was busy baking bread and was so occupied when the soldiers began to come up the Taneytown Road and through the cemetery. As fast as I could cut the hot bread they took it out of my hands.... Every vessel I had in the house, all the tin cups and tumblers were out along the old pump inside the gate and the vessels were kept filled with water for the thirsty soldiers.... They would take a drink and hurry off and this lasted until the pump broke.”

A Union officer came to the gatehouse trying to find a man who could guide the troops through the maze of roads. Elizabeth said her father spoke little English, but she would be willing to go.

The officer refused, saying there was too much danger for a woman. He gave in after the third time Elizabeth told him she would go. The officer insisted that she walk on the side of his horse away from the fighting to give her some protection. When they arrived where the soldiers were waiting, they asked what she was doing there. According to Elizabeth, "the officer said I was all right, and the men gave me three cheers." After she pointed out the main roads, the officer accompanied her back home, again keeping her on the off side of his horse.

Later that day she was enlisted to make supper for General Oliver O. Howard, who was heading the Army of the Potomac until General Meade could arrive. Howard finally showed up at the gatehouse about midnight with Generals Slocum and Sickles, and ate a supper of dough cakes, pancakes, meat, apple butter and coffee.

She asked Howard whether the family should move out of the house, and the general said they should stay, but he would send word if the danger got too great. He also offered to have any "good things" put in a safe place. Then he laughed and said "I guess you think all your things are good." Elizabeth replied that "some were better than others." Howard sent two men to carry the valuables down into the cellar, including a chest of linens that the family had brought from Germany.

Elizabeth and her family did not get any sleep that night, and in the morning a soldier arrived and announced "This family is commanded by General Howard to leave this house as quick as they can, to pick up nothing to take with them but their children." They went some distance down the Baltimore Pike to stay at a farmhouse. But Elizabeth was not one to just sit around, and during the night of July 2nd she and her father returned to the gatehouse. At the cemetery they could hear the groans of the wounded. They found that their pigs were gone, their stable and pig pen had been torn apart for firewood, and even their bee hives were missing. She also found that their house was full of wounded men. They went back to the farmhouse on the Baltimore Pike.

After the battle, there were "sixteen soldiers and one colored man buried in the garden.... In one field lay fifteen dead horses and in the other field nineteen dead horses. They were right beside the cemetery and were not buried and the stench was awful. For days I could hardly eat because of the disagreeable odor."

Up until July of 1863 the Evergreen Cemetery had averaged five burials per month. All that changed. According to Elizabeth "father and I dug 105 graves in the next three weeks.... For all the extra work of burying the soldiers we never received any extra pay from the cemetery nor from any other source, only the monthly salary of \$13."

During all this, Elizabeth was six months pregnant. Three months later she gave birth to a daughter, Rose Meade Thorn. Despite the destruction of her property and the agony her family suffered, apparently Elizabeth's patriotism was not dimmed, since her daughter's middle name honored the Union commander. Unfortunately, Rose was not a strong baby, which Elizabeth blamed on the arduous work required of her after the battle. Rose died at the age of just fourteen

months. On a brighter note, Elizabeth's husband Peter, though wounded, survived the war and was present at Appomattox. He returned home in 1865 and he and Elizabeth continued to manage the cemetery until 1874. They had five more children. Elizabeth died in 1907 at the age of 75.

Unfortunately, Elizabeth Thorn is not well known today outside of Civil War buffs and Gettysburg residents. Most visitors seem more enthralled with the story of Jennie Wade. However, for those who look for it, Elizabeth's memory lives on. Just south of the Evergreen Cemetery gatehouse along the Baltimore Pike stands the Civil War Women's Memorial. It is a statue of Elizabeth Thorn, leaning on a shovel and wiping her brow as she labors to bury the Union dead.



Elizabeth Thorne Statue near the Cemetery Gatehouse

THE SECOND DAY OF THE BATTLE (PART 1)

(SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 4 OF THE SLIDE PRESENTATION SERIES)

STAMPEDE!

Men were killed or injured in almost every conceivable way at Gettysburg, from being torn by bullets and shells to being crushed by wagon wheels. But only one can claim the distinction of almost being trampled in a cattle stampede.

General Henry Hunt was the chief of artillery for the Army of the Potomac. On July 2nd he was everywhere on the battlefield, placing batteries, bringing up the reserves and generally doing all he could to stem Longstreet's assault on Sickles' line. To visit the Union battery at Devil's Den, Hunt had to leave his horse some distance north of the Den and walk the long narrow ridge to the cannon. When he started to return to his horse, shells from Confederate artillery were crashing into the field he had to traverse, killing a cow that was pastured there and putting the rest of the herd into a frenzy. Said Hunt later, "All were stampeded and were bellowing and rushing in their terror, first to one side and then to the other." Managing to avoid their horns, Hunt finally made it to his mount and rode off. He claimed that he was more frightened by the cattle than by enemy shells and bullets, of which he heard plenty that day.



General Henry Hunt

DANIEL SICKLES

Even if Dan Sickles had never set foot on the soil of Gettysburg, history would remember him as a controversial, even scandalous, figure. A successful New York politician, he rose through the Tammany Hall organization and, as a twenty-eight-year-old state assemblyman, shocked his contemporaries by escorting a known prostitute onto the floor of the New York legislature.

A few years later, he set off more uproar by marrying a 16-year-old girl who then soon gave birth to a daughter. Marriage did not prevent Sickles from continuing to cavort with prostitutes; however, the standards he set for his wife were much different. When he learned that she was seeing Philip Barton Key, district attorney of the District of Columbia and the son of Francis Scott Key, he was infuriated. One day in 1859, while serving as a New York Congressman, he noticed Key outside their Washington, D. C. home, trying to signal Mrs. Sickles from Lafayette Park, across the street from the White House. Dan grabbed a pistol, rushed outside and shot Key dead in full view of neighbors and passers-by.

He surrendered to authorities, and while in jail was visited by a constant stream of senators and other members of the Washington establishment. The Sickles trial captured national headlines with lurid tales of infidelity. But Dan's luck held. He was found not guilty by reason of temporary insanity, the first successful use of that defense in American History. As an interesting sidelight, his attorney was Edwin Stanton, who would later become Lincoln's Secretary of War. Sickles then stirred up more tsk-tsking by forgiving his wife and getting on with married life, at least as he practiced it.



Congressman Dan Sickles shooting Phillip Barton Key in Lafayette Park, across from the White House.

When the Civil War came along, it was a perfect opportunity for Sickles to exercise his political ambitions, aggressiveness and patriotism. He immediately raised a brigade of New York volunteers with himself as colonel of one of the regiments. He took surprisingly well to army life and performed courageously and effectively in combat, rising quickly to command the brigade, then to lead a division. When friend Joseph Hooker took over the Army of the Potomac, Sickles became one of his corps commanders.



General Dan Sickles

By the morning of the second day at Gettysburg, most of the Army of the Potomac was arriving on the field and forming into the soon-to-be-famous "fishhook" – Culp's Hill was the barb, Cemetery Hill was the curve, and Cemetery Ridge was the shaft, stretching south toward the Round Tops.

George Meade, who had replaced Hooker only a few days before, positioned Sickles' 6000-man III Corps on the shaft, at the far left of the Union position. Sickles didn't like where he was. At this point, Cemetery Ridge had pretty much petered out and could hardly be called a ridge any more. Sickles looked to his front and spied land that was slightly higher affording, he was convinced, a better position for his corps. So he did what he had always done – what he damned well pleased. Without Meade's permission, he moved virtually his entire corps forward a thousand yards to what he believed was a more defensible position. This caused his line to be stretched thin and bent at an odd angle, making it vulnerable to attack.

About 4:00 PM Meade finally found the time to visit Sickles' section of the front. He was shocked at what he saw. There was no love lost between the two, Meade viewing Sickles as an impetuous amateur and Sickles feeling that Meade was a typical doddering, overly cautious West Pointer. Meade told Sickles that he had positioned his line too far forward, but that it was too late to withdraw, since the Rebels were starting to attack.

Confederate General James Longstreet was overseeing the attack and he would later describe what followed as "the best three hours of fighting ever done by soldiers on any battlefield." Soldiers in blue and gray hammered at each other in places that would soon be remembered as the Peach Orchard, the Wheatfield, Devil's Den and Little Round Top. Meade would attempt to shore up Sickles' sagging line by throwing regiment after regiment into the fray, depleting other sections of his fishhook. When the day ended, the Union line had been pushed back to the original III Corps position on Cemetery Ridge and many of the III Corps regiments were pretty much finished as a fighting force.

Daniel Sickles was finished, too. Before the collapse of the Union line, he was sitting astride his horse when a cannon ball from the direction of the Peach Orchard hit his right leg a glancing blow, shattering the bones below the knee. Spunky as ever despite his painful wound, Sickles was carried from the field sitting up on a stretcher, smoking a cigar as he shouted words of encouragement to his troops. Later that day his shattered right leg was amputated just above the knee. Sickles had the limb placed in a small coffin and sent to the Army Medical Museum (now known as the National Museum of Health and Medicine) in Washington, where he visited it regularly. The bones are still on display today.

Sickles would not return to field command, but he would not disappear, either. He held a series of administrative positions and finally retired as a major general in 1869. That same year he was appointed ambassador to Spain, a post he held until 1874. Still the same old Sickles, he stirred up such trouble with the Spanish government that it took intervention by other government officials to keep the two countries from coming to blows. He was also rumored to have had an affair with the deposed Queen Isabella II (at least at this point he was single, his wife having died in 1867.) In 1871 he married a Spanish woman.

Returning to the US, Sickles held a series of elected and appointed positions including congressman and senator from New York. He remained heavily involved in Gettysburg reunions and preservation efforts. He served for many years as the chairman of the New York Monuments Commission, which oversaw the design of the state's monuments at Gettysburg. As senator, he introduced legislation to form the Gettysburg National Military Park, the driving force behind battlefield preservation. Ironically, one of his contributions was the procurement of the park border fencing on East Cemetery Hill – the fencing came from Lafayette Park in Washington, where years earlier he had shot his wife's lover. It was later moved to separate the Soldiers National Cemetery from Gettysburg's Evergreen Cemetery.

Sickles also spent much of his time bolstering his self-proclaimed image as a great hero of Gettysburg. He engaged in a long-running dispute with George Meade over the decision to advance his corps west of Cemetery Ridge. In March 1864 the New York Herald published a long account of the Gettysburg Battle by someone using the pen name of Historicus. The author was clearly a Sickles supporter (many historians think that Sickles himself wrote it), since the article was blatantly favorable to Sickles and critical of Meade, who was portrayed as timid, indecisive and ready to retreat from Gettysburg after the first day. Sickles would go on to take every opportunity to promote himself and his actions at Gettysburg through other articles, speeches

and interviews. The controversy rages to this day, with some feeling that Sickles' salient broke up the Confederate attack (a view apparently supported by James Longstreet) and others holding that Sickles' action needlessly sacrificed many of his soldiers. Meade falls into the latter group, since he had evidently considered court-martialing Sickles for disobedience, but thought better of it since the Union had won the battle and Sickles had been wounded.

Dan Sickles died in 1914 at age 95, having outlived most of the other generals at Gettysburg.

More than once before his death, he was asked why there was no memorial to him at Gettysburg, especially considering that there are statues honoring every other Union corps commander and many lesser generals. Sickles' answer was always "The entire battlefield is a memorial to Dan Sickles."

But in a way, a fitting memorial to this controversial general does grace the Gettysburg Battlefield. On the west side of modern-day Sickles Avenue stands the monument of the



*Excelsior Brigade
Monument*

Excelsior Brigade, the brigade which Sickles helped to enlist and which started his military career. It is placed where Sickles sent the brigade when he pushed his line forward on July 2nd. It is one of the most striking memorials on the battlefield, capped with a soaring eagle atop five highly polished columns representing the brigade's five regiments. In the center stands a low pedestal looking for all the world like something should be upon it. But the pedestal is empty.

Original plans were for a statue of Sickles to adorn the pedestal, but money ran short. In 1912 a state audit concluded that \$28,000 had been embezzled by the chairman of the monuments commission. A warrant for his arrest was issued, but he was never brought to trial. The chairman, of course, was Daniel Sickles.

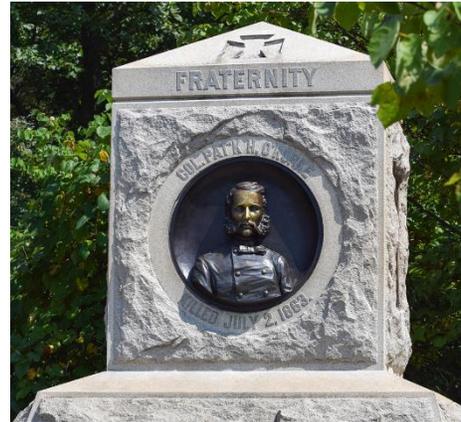
PADDY O'RORKE'S NOSE

Late on the afternoon of July 2nd, Colonel Strong Vincent of the Union 5th Corps rushed his 1,300-man brigade to the south slope of Little Round Top in response to the urgent pleas from General Gouverneur Warren. Only minutes before the Confederates began their assault on the hill, Vincent positioned his regiments with the 20th Maine on the far left, then the 83rd Pennsylvania, the 44th New York, and, on the extreme right, the 16th Michigan. Soon the hillside was wreathed in smoke as the Rebels attempted to drive off the men in blue.

The 16th Michigan, the smallest of Vincent's regiments with only 150 men on the line, soon began to feel pressure from the superior numbers of the attacking 4th and 5th Texas. Then someone – it was never established who – gave an order for the 16th's color guard to fall to the rear to avoid being taken. Nearly a third of the regiment followed. This group, led by the regimental commander, kept going right over the crest. Seeing his brigade line falter, Strong Vincent rushed

to the right and tried to rally the men. At that moment, Vincent fell with a bullet in his abdomen and was carried from the field (he would die five days later.) Now the remainder of the 16th Michigan was fighting for its life, but it could not hold on for long. The Texans were starting to flank them.

General Warren, desperately searching for more reinforcements, came across the 140th New York near the Wheatfield Road just north of Little Round Top. They were commanded by 26-year-old Colonel Patrick Henry “Paddy” O’Rorke. Despite his youth, O’Rorke, who had graduated first in the West Point Class of 1861, had quickly earned the respect of his men. The regiment clambered up the north face of the hill, paused for a moment to load their rifles, then plunged into the fight at just the right place – to the right of the 16th Michigan. Not stopping to put his men into formation, O’Rorke simply yelled “Down this way, boys.” A moment later, he fell with a mortal wound in his throat. But the 140th’s unorganized rush was too much for the Texans. They fell back and would not charge again.



140th New York monument on Little Round Top

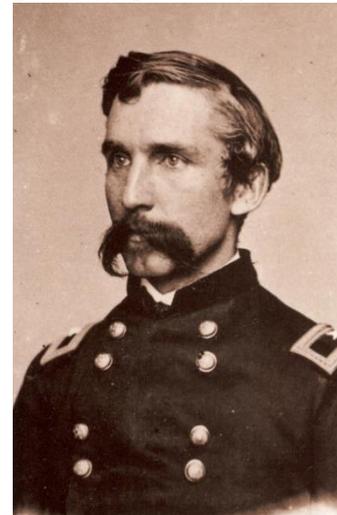
In 1889 the 140th New York erected a monument near the spot where O’Rorke fell. On its face is a bronze bust of the young colonel. Battlefield lore holds that Paddy O’Rorke had the luck of the Irish, but on Little Round Top he surrendered his luck to the living, which helped his men to save the day. To get a little of O’Rorke’s luck, visitors rub his nose, which has been polished bright by countless fingers.

JOSHUA CHAMBERLAIN BEFORE AND AFTER LITTLE ROUND TOP

If the typical American could come up with any two names from Gettysburg, the first would likely be Robert E. Lee and the second would be Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain, a mere regimental commander at the time. Chamberlain’s fame can largely be credited to three different media sources: Michael Shaara’s 1974 Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *The Killer Angels* and the 1993 film *Gettysburg*, based on Shaara’s book, plus Ken Burn’s 1990 TV series *The Civil War*. These sources reintroduced Chamberlain as the Hero of Little Round Top, the man who saved the Union left, the battle, and by extension the entire war.

It has become fashionable for some of today’s historians to put Chamberlain, Little Round Top, and even Gettysburg itself into a different perspective. They argue that it wasn’t just Chamberlain’s 20th Maine that won Little Round Top (there were at least seven other Union regiments there, plus an artillery battery, all fighting just as hard as the 20th Maine); there is no guarantee that if the Rebels had taken Little Round Top they would have then routed the Army of the Potomac; and equally, if Lee had been the victor at Gettysburg, no one can predict this would have led to Southern victory in the Civil War.

Many of these historians have also chided Chamberlain for indulging in outright self-promotion for the rest of his life following the battle. Through several books and many articles and speeches he effectively retold the story of the 20th Maine's stand against the Rebel hoard, and certainly failed to give due credit to others who were heroes that day. This was typical of the many memoirs written after the war, in which the authors dwelt almost entirely on their personal actions and the fighting that they directly observed.



Joshua Lawrence Chamberlain

But let us forgive a man who may have overestimated the importance of “his” battle and whose stories might have grown better as he grew older. For Joshua Chamberlain was the real thing – one of those rare men who truly deserve to stand in the ranks of great American heroes. He might be considered the quintessential citizen-soldier – a civilian who heard his country’s call, served with courage and dedication, and went back home proud of what he had done.

Long before anyone even dreamed there would be a Civil War, young Lawrence (as his family called him) had shown himself to be remarkably tenacious, driven and self-disciplined. In order to be accepted at Bowdoin College in Maine, he taught himself to read Ancient Greek. He would go on to master eight other languages (in addition to English): Arabic, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Latin, Spanish, and Syriac, an ancient Middle Eastern dialect. He also learned the language of the Mohawk Indians who lived in birchbark wigwams near his parents’ house. In addition to his studies, young Lawrence camped and hunted, participated in athletics and even fenced with his father – using broadswords.

He had been troubled in his early years by stammering whenever he had to pronounce certain consonants. This was so troublesome in college that he often declined to participate in class discussions and was stricken with shame whenever he was called upon to make an oral presentation. Through mighty determination and skillful examination of the problem he finally struck upon a variety of solutions. The most effective one was to speak in a rhythmic style, almost singing the words. Over time he developed into a speaker renowned for his eloquent, powerful and melodic style.

He married in 1855 and he and his wife Fanny had five children, but only two survived beyond infancy. He studied at Bangor Theological Seminary and came close to entering the clergy, which was the career his parents were hoping for. Although he had a strong spiritual bent, he instead returned to Bowdoin College and started an academic career by teaching rhetoric. Eventually, he taught every subject in the curriculum except math and science. In 1861 he was serving as Professor of Modern Languages.

His ancestors had served in the Revolution and the War of 1812, and although he had already shown leanings toward the clergy and was successful in academia, Lawrence also had a strong

interest in a very different profession – the military. When war erupted between North and South, he openly voiced his support for the Union, to the point of urging his students to follow their hearts (meaning to serve the Union cause). Such militant advice did not sit well with many of the Bowdoin faculty, of course, and they urged their colleague to take some time off to come to his senses. In 1862 Chamberlain was granted a two-year leave of absence to study languages in Europe. Instead, without first telling his family and fellow professors, he immediately enlisted and was offered the colonelcy of the newly formed 20th Maine Regiment. Feeling that he lacked the military knowledge and experience to lead the regiment, Lawrence accepted the position of Lieutenant Colonel under the leadership and tutelage of Colonel Adelbart Ames, a West Point graduate who was helping to form the regiment.

Chamberlain applied himself to his military studies, reading everything he could find on the subject and picking the brains of Colonel Ames and anyone else he could find with experience. He learned fast. He also possessed natural leadership abilities which could not be gotten from a book.

The 20th was at Antietam, but saw no fighting. Their first taste of combat was during the Battle of Fredericksburg, where they participated in Ambrose Burnside's disastrous assault on Marye's Heights. They spent the freezing night pinned down on the slope, Chamberlain using Union corpses for cover as minie balls thudded into the dead.

At Chancellorsville, the 20th was in the rear performing guard due to being quarantined after receiving smallpox vaccinations. A few weeks later, Chamberlain was promoted to colonel and took over command of the regiment when Adelbart Ames was moved up to brigadier general.

Then came July of 1863 and Gettysburg. When the 20th Maine was stationed at the far left of the Union line on Little Round Top, they had seen only limited combat and were being led by a colonel who less than a year earlier had been a language professor at a small college in a quiet, little town in Maine. Nevertheless, through grit and Chamberlain's quick thinking and determination they performed like seasoned veterans and turned back the stubborn Confederates who attacked the Union left again and again. Joshua Chamberlain and the 20th Maine had found their place in history.

Of course, the war did not end at Gettysburg. The 20th would soldier on to the end, and Chamberlain would continue to distinguish himself.

Later in 1863 Lawrence was laid up by malaria, but by April 1864 he had returned to the regiment, and was made brigade commander a few weeks later. June found him leading his brigade in an attack against strong Confederate earthworks at Petersburg. As he turned to shout an order to the men in his ranks, a minie ball struck him in the right hip, ranged through his groin and stopped just under the skin of his left hip. Lawrence was stunned, but he did not fall. Holding himself up with his sword stuck into the ground, he continued to urge his men on through the heavy fire. Finally, he collapsed from loss of blood. The bullet had done tremendous damage, clipping his bladder and urethra, shattering bone and tearing blood vessels.

He was carried from the field barely alive, and surgeons pronounced the wound mortal. His death notice appeared in Maine newspapers, and Ulysses S. Grant, told that Chamberlain was not expected to live, promoted him to brigadier general. But Lawrence surprised them all. After a difficult recovery, he returned to active duty in November, despite the urgings of his wife, family and colleagues to resign.

Chamberlain led a brigade in the final battles of the war, and suffered a nasty wound in the chest and left arm. But he stayed in command. By the time the fighting ended, he had accumulated an impressive war record: action in over 20 battles, four citations for bravery, wounded six times, and six horses shot from under him.

But there was one more moment of destiny awaiting Joshua Chamberlain before he would leave the Union army. On April 9, 1865 Ulysses Grant met with Robert E. Lee in Wilbur McLean's house in Appomattox Court House to accept the surrender of the Army of Northern Virginia. Grant harkened back to Lincoln's instructions on dealing with the Rebels when the war ended: "Let them up easy." But he insisted on a formal surrender ceremony to make clear to one and all that the Union had prevailed and the country would once again be united. He picked Joshua Chamberlain to preside over the ceremony.

Lawrence was not the sort of man to take such an assignment lightly. Although he had seen much of the horrors of war and fought hard against the rebellion, he bore no anger toward the Rebels themselves. He had, and would maintain for the rest of his life, an idealist's view of war as a contest between honorable men, one which tests the participants and builds character. It was in this frame of mind that he thought long and hard about the sort of ceremony that would be appropriate. He later wrote, "Before us in proud humiliation stood the embodiment of manhood...was not such manhood to be welcomed back into a Union so tested and assured?"

On the chill morning of April 12th, a formation of Union soldiers lined up on both side of the road leading into Appomattox Court House. It was not the entire Army of the Potomac, but a single division of three brigades – enough to be the symbol of the United States. Temporarily in command of the division was Joshua Chamberlain.

The blue-clad soldiers watched as the long gray line of ragged, even emaciated, former enemy advanced down the road toward them. Leading them was General John B. Gordon, who, like Chamberlain, had been picked by his superiors to represent their side at the ceremony. But for Chamberlain the assignment was an honor; Gordon, on the other hand had been stuck with the job, since no higher-ranking officer wished to preside over humiliation. One of the most ardent believers in the Confederate cause, Gordon rode with his head down, staring at the ground dejectedly.

As the gray column came opposite the Union line, Chamberlain gave the order "Carry arms", a bugle sounded and a clatter rippled down the Yankee ranks as the soldiers raised their muskets in salute. Immediately recognizing the significance of the movement, Gordon snapped his head up and sat tall in the saddle. He reared his horse, then dropped the animal's head into a bow toward Chamberlain. His sword point came down to the toe of his boot, saluting the man who was showing such respect to his former enemies. Gordon shouted an order which passed back through the ranks, the Confederate flag dipped, and the men in the surrendering army brought their rifles in a salute in return. As Chamberlain put it, "Honor answering honor...



General Gordon salutes Chamberlain at Appomattox Court House.

On our part not a sound of trumpet more, nor roll of drum; not a cheer, nor word nor whisper of vain-glorious, nor motion of man standing again at the order, but an awed stillness rather, and breath-holding, as if it were the passing of the dead!"

This moment of tremendous symbolism made a great impression on the Confederates; however, as Chamberlain expected, it did not sit well with many in the North. For years there were some who cursed him for going too easy on the Rebels.

Chamberlain returned home to teach again at Bowdoin, but after his military experience, the role of professor lacked excitement. After much urging, he agreed to enter politics as a Republican. In September of 1866 he was elected governor of Maine by the largest majority that state had ever seen. He would go on to serve four one-year terms. His governorship was not without controversy, and he defied the party bosses by supporting the Fifteenth Amendment (which prevented the states from denying suffrage based on race) and opposing the impeachment of President Andrew Johnson. He was also criticized for opposing the establishment of a special police force to enforce prohibition laws – he felt such a force would greatly infringe on the citizens' constitutional rights.

He also came under fire for his willingness to enforce the law regarding capital punishment (his predecessors had skirted the law by refusing to sign the death warrants.) But Lawrence had been under much more dangerous fire before, and took it all in stride, including death threats for revealing irregularities in the state's finances.

His terms as governor ended, Chamberlain was selected by the board of trustees of Bowdoin College as its new president. During his tenure he reformed and broadened the curriculum, and prepared the school to enter the twentieth century. Still troubled by his old war wounds, he resigned from Bowdoin in 1883, after serving as president for twelve years.

Chamberlain wrote and spoke profusely about his war experiences and was active in reunions and veteran's gatherings. His speech at the dedication of the 20th Maine monument at Gettysburg is quoted to this day. He turned his home across the street from Bowdoin College into a virtual Civil War museum, welcoming former comrades to visit and carve their initials into his dining room table. Among all this activity, he managed to buy a twenty-six-foot sailboat and indulged a passion he had enjoyed since childhood.



20th Maine Monument on Little Round Top

The Hero of Little Round Top would be called upon one more time to face down a group of attackers. In 1880 the Maine State House was taken over by an armed mob that was disputing the recent gubernatorial election. Chamberlain, as the commander of the Maine Militia, was called upon to do something. Rather than exacerbate the situation by calling out the militia, Lawrence set himself up in an office in the statehouse and convinced the mob to disperse. But tensions continued to grow, and it seemed that Maine was on the verge of its own civil war, as leaders on both sides riled up the crowds. Both factions offered Chamberlain a seat in the US Senate if he would side with them. As usual, the old general maintained his integrity and refused all offers and pressures. He responded to death threats by bringing a pair of revolvers from home. No one doubted that he knew how to use them.

After twelve days of confrontation and political maneuverings, a rowdy mob of twenty-five or thirty men gathered outside the statehouse claiming to be bent on Chamberlain's murder. He did not cower in his office or surround himself with armed bodyguards. Instead, the old soldier went out – alone – onto the steps of the statehouse to face them. "Men," he told them, "you wished to kill me, I hear.... Killing is no new thing to me. I have offered myself to be killed many times, when I no more deserved it than I do now.... It is for me to see that the laws of this state are put into effect. I am here to do that, and I shall do it. If anybody wants to kill me for it, here I am. Let him kill!"

With that, Chamberlain threw open his coat and glared at the mob. There was a long pause, then an old veteran pushed his way through the crowd and shouted, "By God, old general, the first man that dares to lay hands on you, I'll kill him on the spot!" The mob shuffled off and the crisis was finally settled by the state Supreme Court. As a result of his impartial stance, Chamberlain's political career was over.

In 1893 Lawrence was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions on Little Round Top. True to his character, he accepted proudly but modestly, and requested that the author of a book about MOH recipients simply state that he personally led a bayonet charge "against an overpowering enemy assault."

His malaria returned periodically and his old war wounds had never really healed and continued to trouble him. He wore an early form of catheter ever since his wounding at Petersburg, and despite six operations in the hope of correcting the damage and stop recurring infections, the problems did not diminish. Health issues could not keep the old general down, however, and at the age of 70 he volunteered his services in the Spanish-American War. He said it was one of the major disappointments of his life when he was rejected.

He continued writing and speaking and indulged in a number of business interests, including property development in Florida. Not all of these were successful and after leaving Bowdoin he began to feel some financial pinch. In 1900, he accepted the position of surveyor of the port of Portland, an appointment by President McKinley in honor of his war service.

Chamberlain made many trips back to Gettysburg. The first was in the spring of 1864, while the war still raged, to show his wife where he had fought. The last was in May 1913, as Maine's representative to the planning committee for the 50th anniversary of the battle. It was a difficult trip because of his poor health, but he felt it was his duty to attend. Sadly, his health prevented him from attending the actual reunion in July.

Late in 1913 Lawrence's health started to fail, and he became bedridden with infection in his old wounds. His attending physician was Dr. Abner Shaw, the doctor who had operated on him in Petersburg and treated him all those years. Usually stoic about the discomfort he suffered, Lawrence now described his pain as "unspeakable agony." On February 24, 1914, eighty-five-year-old Joshua Chamberlain finally succumbed to the wound he received half a century earlier.

Perhaps in his final moments The Hero of Little Round Top returned in spirit, as he had done so many times in body, to that bloody Pennsylvania hillside. His own words may have come back to him:

"I went – not long ago – to stand upon that crest whose one day's crown of fire has passed into the blazoned coronet of fame....

"I sat there alone on the storied crest, till the sun went down as it did before over the misty hills, and the darkness crept up the slopes, till from all earthly sight I was buried as with those before. But oh, what radiant companionship rose around, what steadfast ranks of power, what bearing of heroic souls. Oh, the glory that beamed through those nights and days.

"The proud young valor that rose above the mortal, and then was mortal after all . . ."

THE SECOND DAY OF THE BATTLE (PART 2)

(SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 5 OF THE SLIDE PRESENTATION SERIES)

GEORGE NIXON

One of the casualties at Gettysburg was George Nixon III, great-grandfather of President Richard Nixon. George was a forty-two-year-old farmer from Chillicothe, Ohio and a private in the 73rd Ohio Infantry. On July 2, he was shot while skirmishing along the Emmitsburg Road between Cemetery Hill and the town. He lay between the lines all afternoon and into the night, his moans loud enough to be heard by Ohio comrades. Richard Enderlin, a musician with the 73rd, crawled out to Nixon, picked him up and dashed back to the Union lines, as Rebels blazed away at him. 34 years later, Enderlin was awarded the Medal of Honor for his courageous act. Unfortunately, Nixon died of his wounds seven days later, and is buried in the Gettysburg National cemetery. He left behind a wife and several children.



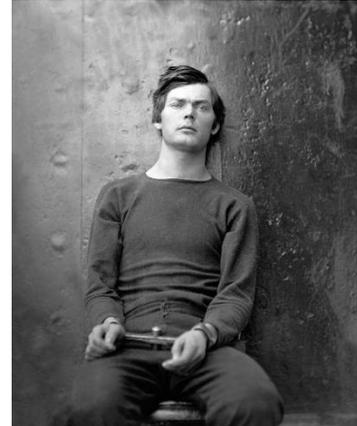
George Nixon

LEWIS POWELL

Late on the afternoon of July 2nd, the second day of the battle, a Confederate private named Lewis Powell was captured when his regiment, the 2nd Florida, attacked toward Cemetery Ridge. Powell had suffered a wrist wound, so was sent to a POW hospital at Gettysburg College. In September, he was transferred to a hospital in Baltimore. Within a week he escaped, possibly with the help of a volunteer nurse, and fled to Alexandria, Virginia. After riding with the Confederate cavalry for about a year, he deserted and went back to Baltimore, apparently to live with the nurse who aided his escape. At some point along the way, he became involved with the Confederate Secret Service and met John Surratt. Powell adopted the alias of Lewis Paine.

Eventually, John Surratt got Powell involved with John Wilkes Booth's plans to assassinate President Lincoln. Powell's assignment on the night that Booth shot Lincoln was to kill Secretary of State William Seward. He came close. The hulking Powell arrived at Seward's home armed with at least one revolver and a large Bowie knife. Saying that he had medicine for the Secretary, he talked his way past the servant at the door. He then proceeded upstairs, where Seward was confined to bed because of injuries resulting from a recent carriage accident. In the upper hallway, Powell encountered Frederick Seward, the Secretary's son, and attempted to shoot him, but the gun misfired. He then pistol-whipped Frederick so hard that the gun was broken and Frederick was left lying in a pool of blood, his skull cracked. Dashing into the bedroom, Powell knocked Seward's daughter unconscious and slashed a male army nurse. Then he turned to Seward who was lying groggy in his sick bed. The assailant slashed at Seward's face and throat, cutting his cheek severely and both sides of his neck. But Seward's life was saved by a metal neck brace, a legacy of the carriage accident. Afterwards, Seward was so sensitive about his facial disfigurement from the attack that he refused to have photographs taken from his right side.

Powell's bloodletting was not finished. Another of Seward's sons rushed into the room and was stabbed seven times. The army nurse recovered enough from his wound that he attempted to grapple with Powell, and received four more knife thrusts. As Powell fled out the front door, he encountered a hapless State Department messenger and stabbed the man in the chest. The attacker then fled down the street shouting "I'm mad! I'm mad!" Incredibly, all five of Powell's victims survived.



Lewis Powell being held before his trial on the Union Monitor USS Saugus at the Washington Naval Yard.

Powell attempted to escape on horseback but either was thrown or fell off. He hid out for three days, then, not knowing what else to do, went back to Mary Surratt's boarding house, where he had lived and the conspirators had met a number of times. He had the bad luck to arrive just as she was being arrested as a suspect. When asked why he was there at that time of night, the slow-thinking Powell claimed he had been hired to dig a ditch. Mrs. Surratt insisted that she did not know who he was. Suspicious police arrested him.

There was no escape for Lewis Powell this time. He was hanged in July 1865 with three other conspirators.

THE 1ST MINNESOTA

July 2nd, 1863 found the 1st Minnesota, the only Minnesota regiment at Gettysburg, stationed on Cemetery Ridge after an exhausting 33-mile march on June 29th. During the march the regiment's commander, Colonel William Colvill had been placed under arrest for allowing some of his men to cross a stream using logs. Union corps and division commanders were pressing their men hard to move on Gettysburg as quickly as possible and felt that behavior like this slowed down the entire army, so such arrests of lower ranking officers were not uncommon. When the regiment reached Gettysburg, Colvill's request to be released from arrest was granted and he resumed command.

The Minnesotans were held in reserve on Cemetery Ridge when Dan Sickles made the ill-fated move of his corps off the ridge and to the west. They watched as the Confederates smashed into Sickles' men in the Peach Orchard, the Wheatfield and Devil's Den. They could see parts of the Union line crumble as some regiments made orderly withdrawals while others broke and fled. Driving the Yanks was a seemingly endless line of soldiers in gray. The men from Minnesota knew it was only a matter of time before the battle reached them.

Soon panicked Union soldiers started pouring back through the Minnesotans. Colvill, an imposing six feet five inches, tried to stop them and some of his men tackled the fugitives, but to no avail.

Then a tall man on horseback rode up and the men immediately recognized the imposing figure as their Corps Commander, General Winfield Scott Hancock. “Hancock the Superb” they called him, in reference to the description that George McClellan had applied to Hancock in a previous battle. He lived up to it this day at Gettysburg, dashing about the field and throwing regiment after regiment into the fray in a frenzied attempt to stop the Confederate onslaught.

Now here was Hancock, as usual cutting a splendid figure with sparkling white shirt collar and cuffs (even other generals could not understand how he maintained such finery in the field), once more casting about for some way to stem the Confederate tide. When he spied the 262 men of the 1st Minnesota, he cried out “My God! Are these all of the men we have here?” Looking east he could see that the nearest reinforcements were at least five minutes away. Looking west he could see the steady advance of a 1400-man Rebel brigade. It was a dire situation, and Hancock did not hesitate.

“What regiment is this?” demanded Hancock. “First Minnesota,” replied Colvill. Pointing at the Rebel flag leading the oncoming Confederates, Hancock ordered, “Advance, Colonel, and take those colors!”

Colvill and every man in the regiment knew what they were being asked to do. It was a forlorn hope, but a few precious minutes must be bought. Colvill turned to his men and shouted, “Will you go along?” It was not so much a question as a command. Then he ordered, “Forward, double-quick.” The regiment advanced down the slope of Cemetery Ridge into the swale at the bottom where flowed a small stream called Plum Run. Entering the swale from the other side was the Alabama brigade whose colors had been targeted by Hancock. Confederate cannon started to pelt the small Union regiment and minie balls whizzed around and into the men. The Minnesotans started to trot then sped up as the Alabamians crossed Plum Run. When the Yanks closed to about thirty yards, Colvill shouted “Charge!” and the men in blue lowered their bayonets and careened into the Rebel line, sending it reeling. Then they paused at the stream to unleash their first volley into the Confederates. The men in gray were shocked by the assault and their momentum was checked. Outnumbered, the surviving Northerners took cover behind the low bank of the streambed, behind trees and rocks, and traded fire with the Rebels. The minutes ticked by – five, six, seven, ten – as the struggle raged on. Finally, Union reinforcements arrived, causing the Alabamians to give up the fight along Plum Run and back off to a safer position.



1st Minnesota monument on Cemetery Ridge where they began their famous charge.

There is some discussion today as to whether the 1st Minnesota actually “saved the day” there on the banks of Plum Run. But Winfield Hancock voiced no doubt. “I had no alternative but to order the regiment in,” he later wrote. “We had no force on hand to meet the sudden

emergency. Troops had been ordered up and were coming on the run, but I saw that in some way five minutes must be gained or we were lost.... I knew they must lose heavily and it caused me pain to give the order for them to advance, but I would have done it if I had known every man would be killed. It was a sacrifice that must be made. The superb gallantry of those men saved our line from being broken. No soldiers, on any field, in this or any other country, ever displayed grander heroism."

Thankfully, not every man in the 1st Minnesota was killed, but the losses were horrific. Of the 262 men who were thrown at the advancing Rebels, 215 became casualties, including 40 deaths. Only 47 men stood in the ranks when the regiment reformed after the fight. The colors had fallen five times only to be picked up and held high again and again. They are now on display in the rotunda of the Minnesota Capital. Among the wounded was William Colvill, the man who had requested to be released from arrest so he could lead his regiment. Although needing use of a cane for the rest of his days, Colvill would recover and live to age 75, dying in his sleep in 1905.

The 1st Minnesota's 82% casualty rate was the highest of any Union regiment in the Battle of Gettysburg, and, by some accounts, in the entire war. After their devastating charge on July 2nd, the remainder of the 1st Minnesota was moved to a more peaceful place on the Union line – a couple of hundred yards south of a little copse of trees on Cemetery Ridge. Here on July 3rd they endured the tremendous Confederate cannonade and helped repulse Pickett's charge. On this day they suffered another 45 casualties.

There are three 1st Minnesota monuments on the Gettysburg battlefield. In 1867 the regiment placed a small urn in the Minnesota section of the Soldiers National Cemetery. This was the first stone monument on the battlefield, previous markers having been fashioned from wood. There is also a small marker near the Copse of Trees where the regiment met Pickett's Virginians. The third, and most impressive, monument was erected in 1897 at the spot on Cemetery Ridge where General Hancock had started them on their heroic charge. Atop a tall granite base emblazoned with "Minnesota" is a soldier at the "double quick" heading into the ravine where the 1st would meet its destiny.

"PAP" GREENE, THE ENGINEER WHO SAVED CULP'S HILL

Most of the combat at Gettysburg was what they used to call "a stand-up fight", with soldiers standing in two opposing lines and blazing away at each other. Here and there, men fought from behind low stone walls or threw up makeshift barricades to offer some protection. But for most, it was pretty much a matter of being erect out in the open while bullets zipped around – or into – them.

The most significant exception to this at Gettysburg was on Culp's Hill. The Confederates had lost an opportunity to occupy the hill on July 1st, before the Yankees got there. But on the evening of the 1st and the morning of the 2nd, the Yankees rushed an entire division to the hill, and the Rebs could only sit by and listen to the work of axes and shovels as the men in blue constructed

breastworks, chest-high walls of rocks, trees, earth and anything else they could lay their hands on. If the Confederates wanted Culp's Hill now, they would have to push the Federal's off.

John Geary, who commanded the division on Culp's Hill was opposed to fighting from behind earthworks because it "spoiled" the men and made them less courageous for open-field fighting, a view held by many high-ranking officers in both North and South. Brigadier General George Greene, in command of the brigade at the crest of the hill, scoffed at this theory and proceeded to have his men build the strongest works they could in preparation for the attack he was sure would be coming. It would be a fortuitous decision.



General George "Pap" Greene

George Greene came from a wealthy shipping family, but they fell on hard times after the War of 1812. A bright student, he had hoped to attend college, but financial considerations forced him to go to work in a New York City dry goods store. One day he happened to meet Major Sylvanus Thayer, the Superintendent of

West Point. Thayer was impressed by the young man and arranged for Greene to attend the military academy. Greene graduated second in his class in 1823 with such a good academic record that he was assigned to teach mathematics and engineering at the academy. One of his students was Cadet Robert E. Lee.

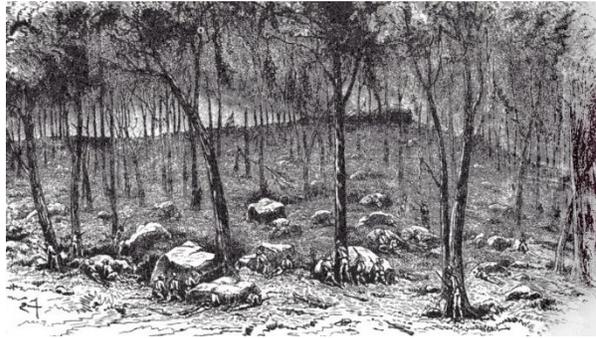
Greene married and fathered three children, but his wife and children all died within a seven-month period in 1833 from what is believed to be tuberculosis. He resigned from the Army in 1836 to become a civil engineer. He built railroads in six states and designed sewage and water systems for several cities, including Washington, D.C. and Detroit. Other projects included a reservoir and bridge in New York City. He remarried and fathered six more children.

George Greene was sixty-one years old and had been out of the army for twenty-five years when hostilities broke out between North and South. Although he had no political leanings, he felt strongly that the Union must be preserved, so it did not take long for him to join up as a volunteer. He was appointed a regimental commander and soon was promoted to brigade leadership. By then his hair was gray and he sported a broad mustache and pointed beard. Despite his age, he quickly earned a reputation as a tough soldier whose men held their ground. Greene's men had initially derisively referred to him as "Old Man Greene" or "Pap", but before long these became terms of respect.

When James Longstreet started his attack on Sickles' salient west of Cemetery Ridge on July 2nd, Generals Meade and Hancock pulled units from anywhere they could to throw into the fight. Soon, Culp's Hill was being stripped and Greene's brigade was spread thin to man earthworks that were meant for a much larger force. About 7:00 that evening, 4,700 Confederates attacked George Greene's 1,400-man brigade. Despite being so heavily outnumbered, the Federals held, thanks in great part to the old engineer's insistence that his men build breastworks. One Rebel claimed "in some places they could scarcely be surmounted without scaling ladders." A New York

officer maintained that “Without breastworks our line would have been swept away in an instant by the hailstorm of bullets and the flood of men.”

The fight raged on into the darkness and in the thick woods the opposing lines could only be identified by muzzle flashes. Reinforcements totaling about 750 men were rushed to Pap’s aid, and they helped to bolster troops who by now were running low on ammunition. But the Rebels kept coming again and again, and finally took possession of some of the Union earthworks near the lower slope of the hill. The fighting died down about 10:30, with the Yanks stubbornly dug in on the top of Culp’s Hill and Rebs holding the bottom.



Rebels taking shelter behind huge rocks as they attack Culp's Hill

By the next morning, both the Union and Confederate forces on Culp’s Hill had been strongly reinforced, and both sides were determined to drive out the enemy. The fighting was vicious all along the line. By the time it petered out about 11:00 AM, the Yankees had regained possession of all of Culp’s Hill and the Rebels withdrew, having lost about two men for every Yankee casualty. The one-sided fight was due in large part to Pap Greene, the old engineer.

Pap returned to engineering after the war, and was the chief engineer commissioner of the Croton Aqueduct Department in New York. Still a tough old bird, at the age of 86 he conducted a walking inspection of the entire 30-mile Croton Aqueduct.

By 1892 Greene was the oldest surviving Union general and the oldest living West Point graduate. With the intent of taking care of his family after his death, he petitioned Congress for a captain’s pension. It took two years, but with the help of Daniel Sickles he was able to get a first lieutenant’s pension, since this was the highest rank he had attained in the regular army. In order to qualify, Greene was sworn into the army again for 48 hours, making him the oldest first lieutenant at the age of 93.

Pap Greene died in 1899 at age 97. His grave in Morristown, Rhode Island is topped with a two-ton boulder from Culp’s Hill. In 1907 on the crest of the hill at Gettysburg where he helped to save the Union right, a statue of Greene was erected, his arm raised as he points toward the attacking Confederates.



"Pap" Greene statue on Culp's Hill. Culp's Hill Observation Tower is in the right background.

THE THIRD DAY OF THE BATTLE (PART 1)

(SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 6 OF THE SLIDE PRESENTATION SERIES)

THE GREAT CANNONADE

As dawn broke on the morning of July 3, the Union soldiers on Cemetery Ridge were greeted with a shocking sight: During the night, the Confederates had moved scores of cannons into position east of Seminary Ridge – and they were pointed at the center of the Union line. Throughout the morning, they could see more guns being moved up. Ultimately, guns stretched for over a mile from the Peach Orchard to the Chambersburg Pike. There was speculation about what this meant. Some Yanks felt these guns were there to cover a Confederate withdrawal, others were sure that it portended another Rebel attack.

Over on the Union right, the vicious fight for Culp’s Hill, which had started late in the evening then died down only to be resumed in the morning, finally abated for good about eleven a.m. On the northern part of Cemetery Ridge the skirmishing over the Bliss farm, which sat half way between the two armies’ lines, ended when the Federals burned the buildings. Then a strange calm settled over the battlefield. Union General Carl Schurz described it as a “perfect stillness” and “a tranquility like the peaceful and languid repose of a warm midsummer morning.” But the general felt “there was something ominous, something uncanny, in these strange, unexpected hours of profound silence.”

Near the Copse of Trees on Cemetery Ridge the ration wagons arrived bringing lunch to the artillery batteries. Just north of the Copse sat Battery A of the 4th United States Artillery, a regular army unit commanded by boyish-looking 22-year-old Alonzo Cushing, who had graduated from West Point in 1861, a year or so ahead of schedule, to feed the war’s appetite for junior officers. A few hungry infantrymen approached the artillerists, who always seemed to eat well, hoping to scrounge some food.



LT Alonzo Cushing

Lunch was also on the mind of General John Gibbon, commander of the division that was posted at the Copse. He asked Generals Meade and Hancock to join him for a stew of potatoes and what Gibbon described as an “old and tough rooster”. Old it may have been, but it must have tasted good to men who had eaten little in the last few days. Afterwards, the generals lit up cigars, which the Union officer corps seemed to live on. Many men dozed in the warmth of the midday sun. There was not much to do but await Lee’s next move.

At 1:07 p.m., according to Mathematics Professor Michael Jacobs of Pennsylvania College in Gettysburg, two Confederate cannon sounded near the Peach Orchard. It was the signal for the start of the greatest cannonade ever conducted in the Western Hemisphere, the one that

preceded Pickett's Charge. Over 100 Rebel cannon shelled the Union lines, and were answered by 80 or so Yankee guns. It went on for over an hour and consumed in excess of ten thousand artillery shells. The smoke and dust raised by the barrage was visible for miles around in Pennsylvania and Maryland. It was said the sound could be heard 150 miles away in Pittsburgh, but was barely audible at Chambersburg, just 25 miles west of Gettysburg. Such acoustical aberrations were mentioned in accounts of other Civil War battles.

Unfortunately for the Confederates, many of their artillery rounds went high and did not have the desired effect on the Union batteries and soldiers on Cemetery Ridge. Several reasons have been offered for this, including the smoke that soon obscured the battlefield, poor quality fuses which burned too long or failed to ignite the shells' explosive charge, or elevation changes as a result of the gun carriages slowly digging deeper and deeper into the ground with each shot. Many of their projectiles passed over Cemetery Ridge and landed in the rear among reserve troops, hospitals and wagon trains; they also chased General Meade away from his headquarters on the back slope of the ridge.



Meade's headquarters showing damage from Confederate cannons, with horse grave in front.

Nevertheless, the cannonade did some damage to the Union troops who had to stay in position along the ridge and to the artillery batteries aligned there. In those days artillery was employed almost exclusively in a direct fire mode; that is, the gunners had to see their targets and aim their cannon using sights on the barrel, much like an infantryman aiming a rifle. The enemy, of course, could see the guns and gunners in return, making them obvious targets. To work the guns, the crews had to stand upright in the open, unlike the infantry, who could seek cover behind stone walls and other protection. So several Union guns were put out of commission, ammunition caissons were blown up, and artillerists killed or wounded. Especially hard hit was Cushing's battery at the Copse of Trees.



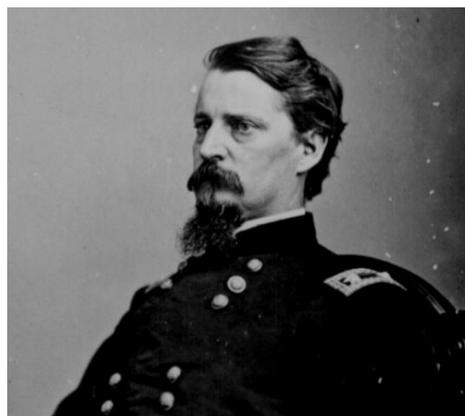
Badly wounded Alonzo Cushing leans on his cannon in this except from the Cyclorama.

Cushing's guns returned fire despite having been reduced to just two cannon and losing many gunners to Confederate fire. Infantrymen were pressed into service to replace lost artillerists. A shell fragment tore into Cushing's shoulder, then another shard opened up his abdomen. He was ordered to the rear, but, holding in his intestines, he insisted on remaining with his guns. "I stay right here and fight it out," said Cushing, "or die in the attempt." Too weak for his orders to be heard, he was held up by Frederick Fuger, his first sergeant, who repeated the young lieutenant's

commands. For his bravery, Fuger was later awarded the Medal of Honor. Cushing was also – belatedly – awarded the Medal of Honor in 2014.

After the war, many veterans tried to describe the terror of the cannonade, but most admitted that the words escaped them. General Gibbon described the scene near the Copse of Trees as “the most infernal pandemonium it has ever been my fortune to look upon.” He added “the whole air above and around us was filled with bursting and screaming projectiles, and the continuous thundering of the guns...” Gibbon, in the tradition that officers must show courage in combat, walked the length of his division’s line with one of his staff officers, Lieutenant Frank Haskell, chatting with his men all the way. Noting that most of the Confederate shells were going high, they decided that they could boost morale even more – and be safer – if they went forward of the lines. So they crossed over the stone wall and walked about 75 yards down the slope, then sat down in the shade of some trees. For them, the closer they got to the enemy, the safer they were. They also had a better view of the enemy lines, since they could see under the cloud of smoke and dust.

II Corps commander General Winfield Scott Hancock, who commanded most of the men who would bear the brunt of Pickett’s Charge, had his own way of cheering his men. He rode slowly along the line seemingly oblivious to the shells screaming around him. When begged to dismount and take cover, he replied “There are times when a corps commander’s life does not count.” It is not recorded whether the guidon bearer following him shared this sentiment.



General Winfield Scott Hancock

Hancock also argued with General Henry Hunt, chief of artillery for the Army of the Potomac, over artillery tactics during the cannonade. Hancock wanted the union guns to vigorously return fire since it bolstered the morale of the Northern troops. Hunt, a crafty artillerist, insisted that the Union cannon fire should slacken, both to conserve ammunition for the infantry assault he was sure was coming and to deceive the Rebs into thinking that the Union guns had been silenced, either by damage from the Rebel fire or lack of ammunition. Hunt won the argument (Hancock was in no position to overrule him). When the Union cannon fire started to slacken, the word was given for the Rebel infantry to start their assault. On Cemetery Ridge, the Federal soldiers watched in awe as 13,000 Confederates emerged from the woods on Seminary Ridge and started their long, deliberate advance. The word rippled up and down the Union line, “Here they come!” “Here comes the infantry.”

THE THIRD DAY OF THE BATTLE (PART 2)

(SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 7 OF THE SLIDE PRESENTATION SERIES)

PICKETT'S CHARGE

Part of Robert E. Lee's plan for the assault on Cemetery Ridge was that Rebel cannon would advance to support the infantry. But for some reason only a small portion – maybe a dozen guns, not enough to make any difference – got the word to move forward. On the other hand, Union guns from Cemetery Hill to Little Round Top started firing on the advancing Confederate infantry almost as soon as they formed up to start their assault (in fact, even while they waited in the

woods, several hundred Rebels were killed or wounded by Union artillery shells aimed at the Confederate batteries.) The guns at the north and south ends of the Union line could fire on the Rebels with what is known as “enfilading fire”, that is, the cannon fired nearly parallel to the infantry lines, rather than perpendicular to them. As the battery commander of the six guns on Little Round Top described it, “several times almost a company would disappear, as the shell would rip from the

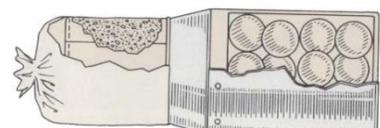


Modern reenactors recreate a line of Union cannons.

right to left among them.” Much the same effect came from the cannon on Cemetery Hill, except that there were more of them; thirty-nine guns tore into the left of the Confederate troops.

As the Confederates advanced further, they came under fire from forty-one more Federal guns of the artillery reserve on southern Cemetery Ridge. “We had a raking fire through all three [Confederate] lines,” said their commander. Up to this point, the Union guns were firing long range ammunition: solid shot, case shot (hollow cannon balls filled with powder and balls, exploded overhead by a timer fuse) and percussion shell (hollow projectiles filled with powder that exploded on impact and blew the shell into sharp shards of shrapnel.) Exploding shells simply had to come “close enough” to mow down a handful or more of infantrymen; on the other hand, solid shot had to actually hit the target. But when a solid ball hit home, the effects were devastating, as described by a captain in the 53rd Virginia, in Pickett's Division, who said that a single solid shot left a line of thirteen men “in a perfect mangled mass of flesh and blood indistinguishable one from the other.” To maximize the effectiveness of solid shot, when the terrain permitted gunners would aim their cannon so the shot would skip across the ground about chest high. It was common for the men in the ranks to see the shot coming, but there was little they could do to get out of the way.

The remaining Union cannon in the middle of the line, near the Copse of Trees, had used up most of their long-range ammunition, so they stayed silent until the Confederate line neared the Emmitsburg Road, a few hundred yards away. Then these guns opened up with canister rounds, essentially tin cans the diameter of the gun's bore filled with one-



Canister round for a civil war cannon.

inch iron balls. It was terribly lethal up to about 250 yards, and at under 150 the gunners would fire double or even triple canister, that is, two or three cans with each shot. It was ideal for use at close range against a charging enemy.

What remained of Cushing's guns in the Angle fired as the long but thinning line of Rebels crossed the Emmitsburg Road and made their way up the slope in front of the Union lines. When Pickett's Virginians neared the stone wall in front of the Copse of Trees Cushing announced "I'll give them one more round" and pulled the lanyard, spewing forth a double load of canister. As he finished this statement, a bullet entered his open mouth and exited out the back of his head. At about the same time, braving the cannon fire, Confederate General Lewis Armistead led his men over the wall and into the Union line. Just before he reached Cushing's guns, three bullets struck Armistead. He died in a Union hospital less than forty-eight hours later.



General Armistead among Cushing's guns at the Angle.

General Gibbon, who had sat down forward of the Union line during the Cannonade, would be wounded in the fighting but would survive the war and remain in the army, finally retiring in 1891. His statue stands on Cemetery Ridge. His adjutant, Lieutenant Haskell, was unscathed at Gettysburg, despite being in the thick of the fighting, and wrote one of the most famous accounts of the battle soon afterwards. It originally appeared as a seventy-page letter to his brother that was later brought out in book form. Unfortunately, he was killed in June 1864 while leading a charge at Cold Harbor, Virginia. Declared a distraught Gibbon, "My God! I have lost my best friend, and one of the best soldiers in the Army of the Potomac has fallen!"

Winfield Hancock paid a severe price for his bravery. Although he survived the Confederate cannonade, he did not come through Pickett's Charge unharmed. As he urged a regiment of Vermont troops to swing out and fire into the flank of the advancing Confederates south of the Copse of Trees, a minie ball crashed into the pommel of his saddle, driving a large nail and other debris deep into his thigh. As his men lowered him to the ground, he ordered that he not be removed from the field until the outcome of the assault had been determined. He would survive his wound and return to fight after a long convalescence, but the wound never really healed and would trouble him for the remainder of his life.



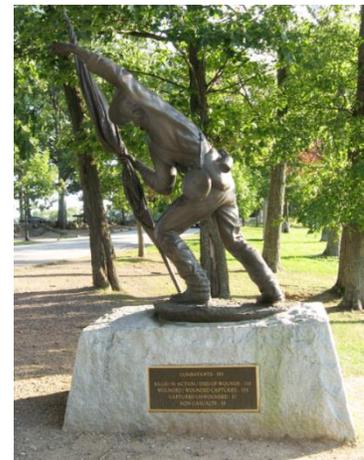
General Hancock monument at the site of his wounding. The Rebels came from the woods on the far side of the barn at right.

Alonzo Cushing's body was buried in the West Point Cemetery. His headstone reads "Faithful unto Death." In belated but well-deserved recognition of his valor and service, in 2014 the young lieutenant who gave all he had at Gettysburg was awarded the Medal of Honor.

Today the area near the Copse of Trees hosts a couple of dozen monuments and markers. Among the towering, imposing edifices of bronze and granite are two small stone markers that the casual visitor could easily miss. Their inscriptions are so worn as to be barely legible. Both were erected in 1887. One commemorates Lieutenant Alonzo Cushing and his brave cannoneers. A few yards away, stands a memorial to General Lewis Armistead, whose Virginians almost took Cushing's guns.

THE 11TH MISSISSIPPI

West Confederate Avenue runs along Seminary Ridge through the area where the Rebel infantry waited before starting Pickett's Charge. Along its length stands an impressive array of Confederate monuments, including one to the 11th Mississippi. Atop a low granite block, a Rebel flag bearer leans forward as though moving into a gale. His left arm is raised to urge his comrades to follow him. He is headed toward Cemetery Ridge, where the Federal Army waits. On the other side of the field, over 1,000 yards away on the ridge that was their target, stands another monument to the 11th Mississippi. This one is a simple stone marker near the Bryan barn, marking the spot where the 11th made it all the way to the Yankee position. Well, at least a few of them did.



11th Mississippi monument on Seminary Ridge.

At the start of the assault, the 11th was in the front line, the fifth regiment from the left at the northern end of the Rebel formation.

Just to their left were four small regiments under the command of Colonel John Brockenbrough. When the Federal artillery opened fire on the advancing Rebels, many of the guns on the northern end of the line were aimed at Brockenbrough's brigade, and it was calculated that more than 1,600 cannon rounds were fired at them. One Confederate recalled, "The enemy's batteries soon opened upon our lines with canister, and the left seemed to stagger under it." As one Union colonel described it, "Arms, heads, blankets, guns and knapsacks were thrown and tossed into the clear air.... A moan went up from the field, distinctly to be heard amid the storm of battle..." Then came the rifle fire.

The 8th Ohio Infantry had been posted just west of the Emmitsburg Road in front of the northern end of the Union line. Seizing the opportunity, their colonel advanced the regiment even further west, then pivoted left so they could fire into the flank of Brockenbrough's men just one hundred yards away. They fired several volleys into the Confederates, then charged. This proved too much for the Rebels, most of whom either fled or surrendered. As much as half of the brigade did not stop running until they had passed back over Seminary Ridge.

After driving Brockenbrough's brigade from the field, the 8th Ohio then turned its attention to the 11th Mississippi, which was now the left-most regiment in the Confederate line. Two other Union regiments swung out to join the 8th, and they all poured fire into the Rebel flank. According

to the 8th's colonel "the mass appeared more like a cloud of moving smoke and dust than a column of troops." Men fell by the dozens and many did not advance east of the Emmitsburg Road, but a few kept going. Fourteen men followed the 11th Mississippi Regiment's colors all the way to the Bryan barn just in front of the stone wall where the Yankees were. There they took shelter and fired around the corners of the barn as they waited for other Rebel regiments to join them. A lieutenant from the 11th wrote of looking back in vain for the reinforcements which would never come. "The state of my feelings may be imagined, but not described" he wrote, "upon seeing the line broken, & flying in full disorder." Able to neither advance nor retreat, they waved a scrap of white cloth and laid low until the Union fire died down enough for them to surrender.

At the other end of the Confederate line, a similar action was taking place. Two Vermont regiments pivoted out to the right and opened fire with 1,300 rifles into General James Kemper's brigade of Pickett's division. Recalled a colonel in the 16th Vermont, "Those great masses of men seemed to disappear in a moment...the ground over which we passed after striking their flank was literally covered with dead and wounded men."

At the start of Pickett's Charge, the Confederate formation was nearly a mile wide. The Copse of Trees near the center of the Union line had been designated as the aiming point for the entire formation, so as they crossed the open fields all the regiments squeezed toward the center. Union fire on the Confederate flanks not only disintegrated the brigades on both ends of the advancing Rebel line, it also caused the soldiers to bunch together even more until their formation resembled a wedge, with the point striking at the Angle and the Copse of Trees. This is where the Confederates led by Lewis Armistead made it over the stone wall and into the Union line.

There was another small wedge of men just to the north, and it was made by the 11th Mississippi, which despite devastating Union fire, made it as far as any Rebels did that day. Some say they made it the furthest. For their valor, out of 393 men they lost 110 killed, 193 wounded and captured, and 37 captured unwounded. Only 53 made it back unscathed. One company, known as the University Greys because every man had been a student at the University of Mississippi, suffered 100% casualties – every member of the company was killed or wounded.



11th Mississippi marker near the Bryan Barn, just in front of the Union line.

At a field hospital behind Seminary Ridge, a Confederate surgeon named Dr. Holt treated one of the wounded Mississippians who had been brought back after the charge. Wrote the doctor, "His left arm and a third of his torso had been torn away and he dictated a farewell letter to his mother."

The note read "This is the last you may ever hear from me. I have time to tell you that I died like a man. Bear my loss as best you can. Remember that I am true to my country and my greatest

regret at dying is that she is still not free and that you and your sisters are robbed of my youth. I hope this will reach you and you must not regret that my body cannot be obtained. It is a mere matter of form anyhow. This letter is stained with my blood."

THE CALIFORNIA REGIMENT

On Cemetery Ridge stands the famous Copse of Trees which marks the spot at which Robert E. Lee aimed Pickett's Charge. Running just in front of the copse is a low stone wall, behind which the Union troops waited. A few dozen paces north of the Copse the wall makes a ninety-degree turn to the east, forming what is now known as the Bloody Angle, or just "the Angle." At the Angle sits a stone regimental monument with an inscription that many find curious: "California Regiment". Did Californians serve in the Union army? Yes, California and Oregon, both Union states, raised ten regiments – but they served only to keep order along the Pacific coast. No regiment of California men came all the way from the Pacific coast to serve in the Army of the Potomac. So why the inscription "California Regiment"?



71st PA Regiment, the "California" regiment

When war broke out, Oregon Senator Edward D. Baker led an effort to raise regiments which would be credited to (and, apparently, funded by) the Pacific coast states (which really meant California, since the population of Oregon was much smaller). In addition to ten regiments actually raised in California, an entire brigade of four regiments was raised, composed of men primarily from Philadelphia. The brigade was credited to California, but was also known as The Philadelphia Brigade to reflect its composition, and the regiments were given Pennsylvania names: the 69th, 71st, 72nd, and 106th Regiments of Infantry, Pennsylvania Volunteers.

On the morning of July 3rd, the four regiments of The Philadelphia Brigade were stationed along the stone wall from just south of the Copse of Trees to the Angle. The 71st Pennsylvania manned the Angle itself, with its right flank "in the air", since there were no Union troops directly on their right. The closest friendly troops were about one hundred yards behind them, where the stone wall took a ninety-degree turn to the north.

When Pickett's Charge smashed into the Angle, the men of the 71st at first were driven back by fire coming from both their front and their right. From their new position nearer to the crest of the ridge they continued firing into the oncoming Rebels. As Union reinforcements started to arrive, the 71st surged forward, back to the wall, and engaged the Southern troops hand-to-hand. Today, the 71st's monument marks the spot along the stone wall where they were positioned at the start of Pickett's Charge and to which they returned in the charge's final repulse. It proudly displays its dual identity: 71st Pennsylvania and California Regiment.

THE “TEEPEE” MONUMENT

First-time visitors to Gettysburg are often startled to see on Cemetery Ridge a bronze monument depicting an American Indian in full regalia standing in front of a teepee. One wonders if this means that there was a regiment of Indians fighting at Gettysburg.

While there may have been a few soldiers of Indian descent in the Army of the Potomac, they were not in significant numbers, and there was not an Indian regiment at Gettysburg. But there is an interesting history to the “Teepee Monument.” It is actually the monument of the 42nd New York Regiment, nicknamed the Tammany Regiment after the powerful (and corrupt) New York City political organization known as “Tammany Hall” for the meeting hall out of which they conducted business. The hall was named after the Delaware Indian Chief Tammany, and it is his likeness which graces the monument.

The morning of July 3rd found the 42nd stationed on Cemetery Ridge just east of the Copse of Trees. Here they suffered through the great cannonade and awaited Pickett’s Charge. When Armistead’s men came over the stone wall near the Angle, the 42nd joined several other Union regiments to surge forward and blunt the attack. At Gettysburg the 42nd lost 15 men killed, 55 wounded and 4 missing.



42nd New York "Teepee" Monument.

The 42nd's “Teepee Monument” can be seen to represent two very different facets of New York City’s past. On one hand, it honors the bravery and sacrifice of men who voluntarily risked their lives for a cause in which they believed. But on the other hand, it is a reminder of the city’s shady political past, a legacy that many wish could be forgotten.

Ironically, Gettysburg has another Tammany Hall connection. Former Union General Francis Barlow, whose wife had nursed him back to health after his terrible wounding on the first day of the battle, later became Attorney General of the State of New York and oversaw the prosecution and conviction of many of the Tammany Hall political bosses.

THE 26TH NORTH CAROLINA

At Gettysburg, Meade’s Army of the Potomac lost 25% of its strength in killed, wounded, missing and captured; Lee’s Army of Northern Virginia lost over 30%. These losses were not spread evenly among the units present on the field. Some regiments on both sides were not involved in the fighting, instead being held in reserve, guarding wagon trains, or occupied with other such less hazardous duties. Even some of those engaged sustained only light losses. On the other hand, as is always the case in war, some units bore a disproportionate share of the fight and

suffered accordingly. The 26th North Carolina Regiment of the Army of Northern Virginia has gone down in history as a prime example of this.

On the first day at Gettysburg, the 26th North Carolina was part of the Confederate force attacking the Union soldiers on the northwest side of town. The opponents of the 26th were the famous Iron Brigade, composed of regiments from Michigan, Wisconsin and Indiana, which had gained a reputation as tough fighters in numerous prior battles. The 26th charged again and again, and the Yankees were slowly forced back across the open fields and ridges, and finally back through the town. Eventually, the Rebs carried the day, but at tremendous cost. At least fifteen different men were shot down while carrying the colors of the 26th North Carolina, including two regimental commanders. By the time the sun set on the first day's fighting, the 26th had suffered over 500 killed, wounded, or missing.

On July 2nd they rested. They would need it, for on July 3rd the 26th North Carolina, a mere shadow of its former self, was assigned as one of the lead regiments on the Confederate left in what has gone down in history as Pickett's Charge. The North Carolinians would be aiming at the Yankee line just north of the famous Copse of Trees.

As the Rebels made the twenty-minute trek across the 1,000-yard-wide fields toward the waiting Federals, solid shot from Union cannon screamed through their echelons, sometimes killing an entire rank with one shot. Exploding shells tore off arms, legs and heads. The Yankee infantry along Cemetery Ridge held their fire until the enemy was well within range. When the left-hand regiments in the Confederate formation reached the fence along Emmitsburg Road, about 200 yards from the Union line, they were slowed while they crawled through or climbed over. At that moment, the entire northern part of the Union line rose from behind a stone wall and poured a devastating volley into the Confederates. Earlier that day, the Yanks had collected and loaded as many muskets as they could find, so they were able to fire multiple volleys without pausing to reload. Union cannon fired canister into the compact Rebel ranks. To make matters worse, the Rebs had to pass through one fence on the west side of the road, cross the road, then go through another fence on the east side. Many did not advance further than that second fence.

Among those who continued to move up the gentle slope toward the stone wall were some of the survivors from the 26th North Carolina. Their colors had been shot down eight times, but every time a willing hand picked them up and continued forward. Finally, just a handful made it up to the wall. But they could go no further. Together, two of the survivors clutched the regimental colors in front of the wall. Suddenly, Union hands reached out and pulled them over and a Yankee voice sang out "Come over on this side of the Lord!"



Today, two monuments to the 26th North Carolina stand at Gettysburg. The first marks the spot where they faced off against the Iron Brigade on the first day of the battle. The second sits just in front of the stone wall on Cemetery Ridge, where a few spent North Carolinians almost breached the Union line.

26th North Carolina monument near The Angle; a similar monument stands north of town to commemorate the regiment's fighting on the First Day.

On these two days of fighting the 26th suffered over 700 casualties, giving them a casualty rate of 88%, one of the highest, North or South, in the Battle of Gettysburg.

COLD HARBOR VS. PICKETT'S CHARGE

An interesting contrast exists between two of the Civil War's great "charges". Pickett's Charge, which took place on the third day of the Battle of Gettysburg, has gone down in history as a supreme example of courage, sacrifice, and dedication to a cause. Its legacy was the High Water Mark of the Confederacy, and its veterans looked back upon it with pride for the rest of their years. That it failed did nothing to diminish the esteem of Robert E. Lee in the eyes of Southerners, and maybe even Northerners as well. The regiments that participated in Pickett's Charge lost almost 7,000 soldiers.

Exactly eleven months later, another charge resulted in 7,000 casualties. This was at Cold Harbor, Virginia, and was conducted by 50,000 Union soldiers acting upon the orders of Ulysses S. Grant. Although the percentage of losses was much lower than Pickett's Charge (less than 15% vs. over 50%), Cold Harbor became symbolic of the needless waste of lives in poorly conceived and unimaginative military actions. The attack at Cold Harbor was the only decision that Grant would admit to regretting, and for it he was labeled a "butcher", even in the North.



Artist's rendition of the Union charge at Cold Harbor.

As Civil War historian James McPherson puts it, "This contrast speaks volumes about the comparative images of Grant and Lee, North and South, Union and Confederacy."

THE AFTERMATH OF THE BATTLE

(SUPPLEMENTING CHAPTER 8 OF THE SLIDE PRESENTATION SERIES)

CASUALTIES – “THE LAST FULL MEASURE OF DEVOTION”

Gazing over the fascinating Gettysburg battlefield and hearing the heroic stories, one can easily lose sight of the reason that the two armies met here: To visit violence upon each other. Gettysburg was the largest Civil War battle in terms of not only the numbers engaged but also in casualties.

The horror of Civil War casualties cannot be appreciated without a comparison to America’s earlier wars. The War of Independence resulted in about 25,000 deaths. The War of 1812 claimed approximately 20,000; the Mexican War, another 13,000. No wonder that when the casualty numbers started coming in from Civil War battles, the nation was shocked.

In total, somewhere around 620,000 American soldiers died in the Civil War (215,000 in battle, the rest from disease.) The North lost 360,000; the South 260,000.

Here in the 21st century we are accustomed to the large casualty figures from the conflicts of the last 100 years. Still, we would do well to remember that the number of American deaths from World War I, World War II, Korea and Vietnam *combined* is almost exactly equal to the deaths in our Civil War.

By July of 1863 the country had been through two years of war, so huge casualty figures were nothing new, but the Gettysburg numbers still numbed the nation. Although Civil War casualty figures are hard to pin down due to records that are notoriously undependable, especially for the South, the figures below are consistent with most sources:

Army of Potomac:

94,000 soldiers engaged

23,000 casualties (3,200 killed, 14,500 wounded and 5,4000 missing)

Army of Northern Virginia:

71,000 soldiers engaged

23,200 casualties (perhaps as many as 4,700 killed, 12,700 wounded, 5,800 missing)

Approximately 4,000 of the wounded died later of their wounds, about equally divided between North and South, so that number could be added to those killed outright. Around 2,800 of these died without surgery; judged to be mortally wounded, they were simply set aside in “dying wings” of hospitals or outside under “dying trees”. Another 1,200 died following surgery, often as a result of amputations or operations on chest and abdominal wounds.

Memoirs and diaries mentioned many places on the battlefield where the writers claimed, with little exaggeration, they could have walked across the field on the bodies of the dead and

wounded, never touching the ground. A Union soldier remembered that after the terrible fighting on the second day, “the night air was burdened with the plaintive moans of wounded men who were lying between the lines and begging for water.” Both the attackers and defenders of Little Round Top described how blood pooled among the rocks.

The raw numbers do not tell the whole story. Here is how author Gary Wills describes the scene in *Lincoln at Gettysburg*:

Eight thousand human bodies were over or (barely) under the ground. Suffocating teams of soldiers, Confederate prisoners, and dragooned civilians slid the bodies beneath a minimal covering, as fast as possible – crudely posting the names of the Union dead with sketchy information on boards.... Fighting clustered bluebottle flies black on the earth, shoveling and retching by turns.

Even after most bodies were lightly blanketed, the scene was repellent. A nurse shuddered at the all-too-visible “rise and swell of human bodies”.... A soldier noticed how earth “gave” as he walked over the shallow trenches. Householders had to plant around the bodies in their fields and gardens, or brace themselves to move the rotting corpses to another place. Soon these uneasy graves were being rifled by relatives looking for their dead.

Said one resident, “The stench of the battlefield after the fight was so bad that everyone went around with a bottle of pennyroyal or peppermint oil.” In addition to the smell of putrefying flesh, they also had to contend with the garbage and excrement of 160,000 soldiers and thousands of horses.

Local banker David Wills observed, “In many instances arms and legs and sometimes heads protrude and my attention has been directed to several places where the hogs were actually rooting out the bodies and devouring them.” This was too much for Wills, who spearheaded the drive to establish the Soldier’s National Cemetery, next to Gettysburg’s Evergreen Cemetery, and to move the Union dead to there. The winning bid was \$1.59 per corpse. The work began in October and was not finished until March 1864, so it was still going on when Lincoln delivered his famous address. Eventually, 3,512 Union bodies were buried at the cemetery; over 1,000 of them are unknown.



Digging up the dead for reburial.

Confederate dead were left on the field, although many were reburied deeper. In the early 1870's Ladies Memorial Societies from several southern cities arranged for the removal and reburial of 3,320 bodies in their cities. Almost 3,000 of them were buried in Richmond's famous Hollywood Cemetery, along with 15,000 other Confederates and luminaries including Jefferson Davis, George Pickett and Jeb Stuart. A ninety-foot granite pyramid stands in memory of the Confederate dead.



The Hollywood Cemetery Pyramid in Richmond.

Maybe even worse than the dead were the wounded. Lee took about 6,000 of his less seriously wounded with him when he retreated. These filled two wagon trains, the longer of which stretched over seventeen miles. The un-sprung wagons bounced along muddy, rutted, rocky roads, causing incredible agony among the passengers. Men cried out for their mothers, some begged for water, others prayed to die or pleaded to be put out of their misery. One can only wonder how many Rebel bodies still lay buried along the Pennsylvania and Maryland roads where the ghostly trains passed.

Another 7,000 wounded Confederates remained behind to the mercy of the Yankees. These plus the Federal wounded left Gettysburg, a town of 2,500, in possession of 20,000 men badly in need of medical attention. This suddenly, albeit temporarily, made the town about the 40th largest in the nation, and with almost no facilities to care for the injured. Virtually every public building and many private homes and barns were turned into hospitals. Blood soaked through carpets and floorboards, furniture was ruined, bedding and curtains were pressed into service as bandages or rags.

But the buildings overflowed, so many wounded were left outside, perhaps placed in the shade of a tree to ward off the sun and given a blanket or some rags at night if they were fortunate. Operations were often performed in the open with a door propped up on sawhorses for an operating table. Overtaxed surgeons (for a week after the battle, one per 900 wounded men) worked without rest suturing wounds and cutting off arms and legs, which formed gruesome piles all over town. One Union surgeon recalled performing fourteen amputations without a break.



Civil War amputation.

Then it began to rain. It started on July 4th and soon turned into a deluge. Many wounded were left lying on the ground with no protection, shivering in the cool night air. Cellars and low-lying areas where wounded had taken shelter soon flooded, and streams overflowed their banks. No one knows how many drowned or the number of deaths that were hastened by exposure.

Union hospitals were established during and immediately after the battle but were overwhelmed by the number of wounded. Many buildings that were pressed into use as hospitals were kept

in that role for weeks, there being nowhere else to put the wounded. After the Rebel retreat, Union soldiers found 400 Confederate and 200 Union wounded in the Lutheran Seminary building and in tents on the campus grounds. It was eight weeks before the last of them left.

By mid-July a general hospital, named Camp Letterman after the Medical Director of the Army of the Potomac, was established in tents in a wooded area east of town. Garlands of pine boughs festooned every tent in an attempt to cover up the smell of infected wounds and gangrenous flesh. Patients who became well enough were sent by train to hospitals in Baltimore and other cities. During its existence, Camp Letterman treated over 1,600 of the wounded. It closed in November, and a few of the last patients and nurses were able to attend the dedication ceremony for the new Soldier's National Cemetery and hear the President speak.



A portion of Camp Letterman

Perhaps the most apt description of Gettysburg after those three days in July 1863 came from someone who had died a decade before the start of the American Civil War. English Field Marshal Arthur Wellesley, the 1st Duke of Wellington, is the man who defeated Napoleon at Waterloo. He never saw Gettysburg, but he had seen as much of war as anyone, and knew well its aftermath. "Nothing except a battle lost," said Wellington, "can be half as melancholy as a battle won."

PROPERTY DAMAGE

In an age when we have become inured to the virtually complete wartime destruction of entire cities wrought by high explosives, fire and – thankfully, in just two cases – atomic bombs, the amount of damage done to the town of Gettysburg and its surroundings can seem minor. Nevertheless, to many of the people living there, the whirlwind of battle that swept across their community was devastating.

After the battle, residents could file damage claims with either the State of Pennsylvania or the US Army Quartermaster Corp. It appears that the state was somewhat more lenient in approving claims than was the federal government. The Quartermaster Corp generally stuck to a rule that no compensation would be approved for property damage due to the "operation of war", and tended to approve only those claims which related to seizure of property for use by the U. S. Army – often feed for horses. It could take months, or even years, for a claim to be processed, and then the result might be a payment amounting to a mere fraction of the amount claimed, or none at all.

Claims often cited the destruction of acres of wheat, corn, oats, barley, flax, potatoes – all trampled by soldiers' feet, horses' hooves, or wagon wheels. Already harvested hay, corn, wheat

and other crops were also mentioned. Livestock claims included horses, cows, pigs, sheep, chickens, even bees.

Although many buildings were damaged by rifle and cannon fire (and some still show the damage today), only a few barns or homes were completely destroyed, typically by intentional burning to deny their use by the enemy. In these cases, the families lost virtually everything, there being no time to remove their personal possessions. Even if a house was not burned, the occupants' belongings were often ruined or stolen.

Fence rails and planks were particularly vulnerable, since both sides seized them for firewood or to stack up with rocks and dirt to make protective earthworks. Many a cup of coffee was boiled over some poor farmer's former fence. Scores of fences were cut down to make room for advancing bodies of troops and artillery. Pictures taken soon after the battle show lines of fence posts, barren of the connecting rails. At the large Trostle farm near the center of the battlefield, the owners claimed that, along with acres of crops and a number of farm animals, 6,400 fence rails, valued at eight cents apiece, had been destroyed. Some fences that suffered particularly heavy rifle and cannon fire, like those along the Emmitsburg Road over which the Rebs advanced during Pickett's Charge, were reduced to splinters, or were so full of holes as to be worthless.



Famous photo of the Trostle barn taken a few days after the battle, showing missing fence rails, cannon ball hole in end of barn below the diamond-shaped openings, and dead Union artillery horses.

A few examples are representative of the sort of damages suffered:

- When Elizabeth Thorn finally returned to her home in the Cemetery Gatehouse on July 7th, she found a shambles. Their pigs were gone, their stable and pig pen had been torn apart for firewood, and even the bee hives were missing. All this had been done by Union soldiers, since no Confederates occupied the gatehouse. Elizabeth reported "Everything in the house was gone except three feather beds and a couple of pillows. The beds and a dozen pillows we had brought from the old country were not fit to use again. The legs of six soldiers had been amputated on the beds in our house and they were ruined with blood.... There wasn't a single piece of our clothing left." For the next six weeks she wore the same dress in which she had fled on the morning of July 2nd. Her husband Peter submitted two claims to the Quartermaster General: \$404 and \$355. They eventually received only \$41.50 in compensation for two tons of hay and four bushels of corn.
- John Herbst' farm was in the midst of the first day's fighting on McPherson's Ridge. Confederates burned his barn because Yankees were firing from it; they also wanted to burn his home, but demurred because there were wounded men in it. Herbst submitted a claim for \$2,689.36 for the barn, for "a four-horse threshing machine, a reaper and

mower, eight sets of horse equipment, a windmill, a wheelbarrow, a cultivator, two plows and a 'corn-fork', plus foodstuffs." For some reason, the authorities allowed him a settlement of \$2606.75; what accounted for the \$82.61 difference is unknown.

- At the Lutheran Theological Seminary on Seminary Ridge, Simon Schmucker, the faculty chair, reported that "the injury done to the institution is considerable.... The house I occupy was most damaged.... Thirteen cannon balls or shells pierced the walls, and made holes several of which were from 2 to 3 feet in length and nearly as broad; window frames were shattered to pieces, sash broken and greater part of the glass in the house destroyed. The fences around the yard and garden were nearly all leveled... The Seminary edifice [known as the old dorm] was perforated by several balls, and portions knocked out of the N. east gable corner. There being also a crack in the wall extending over two stories."
- Joseph Sherfy, whose peach orchard was renowned for the quality of its peaches long before it became famous as THE Peach Orchard, returned after the battle and found that, "The barn was in ashes; the house, while still standing, was riddled with shot and shell; the fencing was all down and much of it gone, and the shrubbery and peach trees were nearly destroyed. In the ashes of the barn the charred bodies of 14 men were found who had been wounded and taken refuge there."
- George Rose's farm included the famous Wheatfield, the scene of terrible fighting on the second day. His neighbor visited the farm with Rose after the fighting and recorded that, "A much disgusted man was Rose.... His stock was gone, his furniture was gone. His house was filled with vermin, his supply of drinking water was polluted with dead bodies; nothing was left of his farm but the rocks and some of the soil. Nearly 100 Confederates were buried in his garden, some 175 behind the barn and around the wagon shed; the half of a body sent asunder by spherical case shot was in his spring whence came the drinking water." A claim of \$4,500 was filed with the federal government, but no payment was authorized.

Some Locals tried to make up for their losses by salvaging items from the battlefield. The Army announced in mid-July that all those who picked up government property had to return it. Not surprisingly, few complied, so the Army sent out armed patrols to go door to door. This met with only limited success. A more serious result of this battlefield scrounging was a dozen or more deaths or injuries over the next few years resulting from youngsters picking up unexploded artillery shells.

LOADED MUSKETS

After the battle, 27,574 muskets were policed up from the battlefield; 24,000 were still loaded, many with multiple bullets. In the heat of battle, it was not unusual for a soldier to keep ramming in powder and bullets, but neglect to place a percussion cap on the nipple, making it impossible for the weapon to fire. When the soldier pulled the trigger, the lack of recoil and noise went

unnoticed in the tumult. The soldier would assume his weapon had gone off, and ram another load down the barrel. This tendency to keep “firing” was not unique to Civil War soldiers. When the armies of the world switched to repeating bolt-action rifles late in the 19th century, many were designed so the bolt would not close if the magazine was empty. Otherwise, soldiers in combat could have kept working the bolt and pulling the trigger, never knowing that they were not sending any bullets downrange.

HORSES

Civil War armies moved almost entirely by foot and horsepower. Horses were everywhere at Gettysburg – carrying officers and cavalry troopers, pulling untold numbers of wagons hauling food, ammunition, medical supplies and the other baggage needed to support a large army in the field. Horses were also used to move artillery pieces and their limbers and caissons. In addition to the thousands of soldiers who died at Gettysburg, between 3000 and 5000 horses were killed, many of them artillery horses, since they had to be close to their guns, and the guns always drew enemy fire. Not only did opposing cannon engage in artillery duels, but infantry made it a standard practice to shoot down enemy artillery horses, immobilizing the guns and making them easier to capture.

After the fighting on July 2nd, just in the area near the Trostle house north of the Wheatfield, forty-five artillery horses lay dead. In another incident a gunner reported seeing a single cannon ball pass through six horses standing side by side. Overshoots from the Confederate cannonade on July 3 wreaked havoc among the horses of Meade’s staff near his headquarters at the Leister house, 400 yards behind the crest of Cemetery Ridge. The widow Leister complained of sixteen dead horses scattered about her property afterwards.

While great efforts were made to treat the wounded soldiers on both sides, little was done for wounded horses, most of which were destroyed in place. The human dead were buried as soon as possible, but horse carcasses continued to litter the field long after the battle. Many were burned or simply left to rot – burying a horse was a big job, and the citizens were busy with other priorities. Between the decaying horses and the shallowly buried human dead, an aura of rotting flesh permeated the air of Gettysburg for months to come.

MISCELLANEOUS STORIES ABOUT THE BATTLE

(SUPPLEMENTING VARIOUS CHAPTERS OF THE SLIDE PRESENTATION SERIES)

TIRED, HOT AND THIRSTY

If there is a universal feeling experienced by all soldiers on all battlefields it is probably being tired. Fighting is hard work, and the stress of battle is exhausting. At Gettysburg, not only did soldiers engage in a great deal of fighting, many of them had conducted fatiguing marches just to get to the fight. For example, in order to participate in second day's fighting at Devil's Den and Little Round Top, the Alabama brigade of Brigadier General Evander Law marched 24 miles in nine hours. An hour after they arrived at Gettysburg, they set off with the rest of the attacking Rebels on what was supposed to be a four-mile hike to get into proper position for the assault. Due to a long backtrack to avoid being observed by the Yanks, this turned into an ordeal that was several miles longer and took a couple of more hours. Within an hour of getting into position the men started their attack.

Many of Law's soldiers had empty canteens from the morning's long march. William Oates, the colonel commanding the 15th and 47th Alabama, sent off a party of twenty-two men carrying their comrades' canteens to search for water. They would not return, leaving the remaining soldiers with no water with which to slake their thirst and wash out the acrid taste of black powder smoke. The two regiments advanced a mile from Emmitsburg Road toward Round Top, where they encountered a group of US Sharpshooters and pursued them up the hill. The Alabamians chased the Sharpshooters over the crest then, exhausted, collapsed on the summit. Orders soon came for Oates to attack Little Round Top. The Alabamians were on the far right of the Confederate line, where they found themselves face-to-face with Joshua Chamberlain's 20th Maine. Despite their fatigue, the Rebs charged the Maine regiment again and again, creeping further right to flank Chamberlain's line. They were thwarted by the Maine colonel's decision to extend his line to the left and bend it back to keep from being flanked. Finally, out of ammunition, the 20th made its famous bayonet charge, which swept Oates' men down the slope of Little Round Top. For his part, Oates maintained to his dying day that it wasn't so much the bayonet charge that ended the fight. He claimed that, realizing that his men were played out and their ammunition was almost gone, he ordered a retreat at about the same time that Chamberlain ordered the bayonet charge. "When the signal was given," wrote Oates, "we ran like a heard of wild cattle."

Sleep is a rare and precious thing on a battlefield, and at Gettysburg it eluded all from the lowest private to the top of the officer corps. George Meade slept not at all on the night of the first day's battle, spending the entire night inspecting the Union lines. He slept for only three or four hours during the early morning of July 3rd. Across the battlefield, Porter Alexander, Longstreet's artillery chief, had spent the day of July 2nd racing about the field positioning and moving cannon to support the attack on Sickles Corps. Of that night he wrote, "What with deep dust & blood & filth of all kinds, the trampled & wrecked Peach Orchard was a very unattractive place, but I secured two good straight fence rails, ...placed about four inches apart under one of the trees, & with my saddle for a pillow & with the dead men & horses of the enemy all around, I got two

hours of good sound & needed sleep.” Need it he would, for he was up before dawn preparing for the Great Cannonade that preceded Pickett’s Charge.

The exhaustion of fighting and marching was exacerbated by the soldiers’ uniforms and the equipment they carried. On the march, each man toted forty or fifty pounds of rifle, ammunition, food, water, backpack and other sundry items. For the most part, their uniforms were made of heavy, hot wool. Shoes were heavy leather. This being the Victorian Age, men were accustomed to wearing long underwear, and the soldiers at Gettysburg appear to have followed this practice. Union Lt. Frank Haskell, who was in the thick of the fighting at the Angle during Pickett’s Charge, told of a bullet that had glanced off his saddle, then “pierced the thick cloth of my trousers and two thicknesses of underclothing, but had not broken the skin.” He also described himself as “drenched with sweat, the white of battle...now turned to burning red. I felt like a boiled man.” No wonder!

The Gettysburg weather, which was seasonal for early July in southern Pennsylvania, only added to the misery, hanging like a steaming blanket over the battlefield. July 1st was clear with a high temperature of 76 degrees. The 2nd started out foggy and humid, then a light rain developed in the afternoon, but temperatures were even higher, reaching 81. The third day was the hottest and even more humid. The high for all three days was 87 degrees, reached at 2:00 PM on July 3rd, during the peak of the great cannonade. This was the highest temperature recorded for the entire month of July, 1863.

DRILL, DRILL, DRILL

To the modern observer, the nice, tight formations in which Civil War soldiers fought may seem absurd – what sense does it make to present such a big target to the enemy? To nineteenth century armies it made perfect sense. To win a fight, it was necessary to bring a greater volume of fire on the enemy than he could bring on you. A highly trained soldier could get off about three shots in one minute, so it was important that a group of soldiers would fire together. To do this, a commander wanted his men close together so a volley would put as many bullets as possible into the opposing force. Tight knit formations were also easier to control – the soldiers could all hear an order to fire at the same time (at least until the thunder of battle got too great), could easily change their fire to a different direction, and would respond quickly when it was necessary to move to another part of the battlefield or when it was time to fall back. Men packed tightly together could also draw courage from each other and were less likely to take independent action, which was strongly discouraged. Massed fire by disciplined troops, not individual marksmanship or heroics, was the key to victory.

Additionally, compact marching formations were the most efficient way to move large bodies of troops to the battlefield in a timely manner. Upon arrival, the soldiers had to be transitioned from their marching formation to the appropriate fighting formation. This was not simply a matter of having the men fall out and then reassemble in a different alignment, which would be confusing and time-consuming. Officers, usually starting with the brigade or regimental

commander, would have to give complex orders to make sure the men ended in the right formation and faced the right way.

To achieve the desired performance in battle, the soldiers and officers drilled constantly, practicing the complex maneuvers they would need to execute without hesitation on the battlefield.

So the next time we see today's soldiers marching in neat formations we may want to pause before we question the value of this. We would do well to remember that they are not just carrying on the traditions of their forbearers. Even though they no longer go into combat in tight formations, marching instills the discipline and teamwork vital to survival on the modern battlefield. Plus, it looks really snazzy!

THE CYCLORAMA

The Gettysburg Cyclorama, a huge circular painting depicting Pickett's Charge, was created in 1884 by famed artist Paul Philippoteaux. It was first exhibited in Boston, then sold to a New Jersey department store which used it for promotions. It was eventually purchased by entrepreneurs, brought to Gettysburg, and put on display in 1913 in a circular building on Baltimore Street, near the entrance to the Soldiers' National Cemetery. The National Park Service purchased the painting in 1942 and conducted a much-needed restoration. Years of deterioration due to neglect, poor storage and being displayed in an unheated, leaky building reduced the restored painting to 27' x 356' from its original 42' x 365'.



Early Cyclorama building

In 1962, the cyclorama opened to the public in a newly constructed, modernistic Cyclorama Building on Cemetery Ridge. In 2008 the painting was moved to the new Museum and Visitors Center, where it is now on display. The National Park Service planned to demolish the old Cyclorama Building since it no longer served any useful purpose. Additionally, the building sat on a part of the battlefield which saw action during Pickett's Charge, and the Park Service wanted to restore this site to its 1863 appearance. Ironically, a group of preservationists blocked demolition, claiming that the building possessed "exceptional historic and architectural significance."



The much-maligned and much-revered 1962 Cyclorama building.

Thus, we had preservationists battling with preservationists – one group wanting to preserve the battlefield by removing what they considered to be an intrusive eyesore and another wanting to protect a building that was constructed a hundred years after the battle was fought. Finally, the “battlefield preservationists” won out, the building has since been removed, and the site is being restored to be as close as possible to what it looked like in 1863.



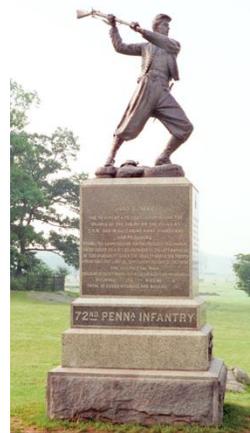
Today's National Military Museum and Visitor's Center, which houses the Cyclorama.

ANOTHER BATTLE – THIS TIME OVER A MONUMENT

One of the most dramatic sculptures on the battlefield is that of the 72nd Pennsylvania Infantry at the Angle on Cemetery Ridge. It depicts a Union soldier in Zouave uniform – high laced boots, baggy pantaloons, and short jacket – with “clubbed musket” poised to bash any Confederate trying to make it over the stone wall at the climax of Pickett’s Charge. The location of this monument was the subject of acrimonious debate for years following the war.

On the morning of July 3rd, the 72nd was stationed near the crest of Cemetery Ridge, over one hundred yards east of the stone wall at the Angle. Here they sat out the cannonade and awaited the oncoming Rebel infantry. When Lewis Armistead’s Virginians neared the wall, Union soldiers stationed along the wall fired into the Rebels, then many of them fell back to near where the 72nd stood.

General Alexander Webb, the newly appointed commander of the “Pennsylvania Brigade”, ordered the 72nd to charge. They refused. Webb was so new in this job that many of his soldiers did not recognize him on sight, which probably added to their reluctance to follow the orders of this unknown officer. Webb wrestled with the regiment’s color bearer, trying to seize the flag in the hope that he could use it to lead the men forward. Unsuccessful, he finally gave up in disgust and went over to another of his regiments, the 69th Pennsylvania, which was clinging to its position along the stone wall just south of the Copse of Trees. The 72nd held its ground and fired into the pack of Rebels who were now inside the Union lines. They would not advance, but neither did they fall back. Many in the 72nd were shot down where they stood at the crest of Cemetery Ridge.



72nd Pennsylvania Monument, with the Copse of Trees on the left.

Lt. Frank Haskell, an aide to the division commander, also tried frantically to get the 72nd to advance. He asked a major, then a captain to order the men to charge. Both refused. Then he rode over to a sergeant who was holding the colors (six previous color bearers had already gone down) and persuaded him to advance the flag. The sergeant went forward with only one man with him. The sergeant, like the others before him, was shot down. This was too much for the

remaining men of the 72nd. With a roar, they dashed forward into the Confederates. At the same time, other Union regiments broke their ranks and swarmed into the Rebels. For a few long minutes the opposing sides tore at each other with rifle butts, fists, bayonets, even rocks. Finally, the Confederates had had enough.

Twenty-five years later, a dispute arose over the placement of the 72^{nd's} monument. The Gettysburg Battlefield Memorial Association, which at the time oversaw everything regarding monuments and markers, held that the monument for the 72nd should be placed at the spot near the crest of Cemetery Ridge where they stood when the attack began and where they held their ground. This was consistent with standard policy, and other regiments which were lined up near the 72nd agreed to locate their monuments there. The Survivors' Association of the 72nd Pennsylvania, however, insisted that their monument should be located at the stone wall, close to where they finally arrived after they made their forward thrust. A lengthy legal battle ensued, including testimony by General Webb which was unfavorable to the 72nd. The case made it all the way to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court. In the end the 72nd won, although apparently on some sort of technicality. So today the monument has its place along the stone wall at the Angle. No matter where the monument ended up, it must be said that the 72nd paid their price for the Union, suffering 57% casualties at Gettysburg, mostly during Pickett's Charge.

Interestingly, the 72nd also figured in another court case. The original plans for the Gettysburg Electric Railway called for the tracks to run south from Cemetery Hill along the length of the Union line at the High Water Mark, just a few feet in front of the stone wall at the Angle. The 72^{nd's} Survivors' Association had previously purchased the land around where they wished to place their monument, including the ground over which the railway would run (this was before the creation of the Gettysburg National Park, which certainly would have stopped such a purchase). The Survivors' Association forced the railway to locate their tracks much further west, on the other side of Emmitsburg Road. Once again, the 72nd helped to protect the Union line!

THE GETTYSBURG ELECTRIC RAILWAY

Despite the efforts to preserve the Gettysburg Battlefield as it was in 1863, there have been many changes. The most obvious, even to the casual observer, are the hundreds of monuments and markers commemorating everything from states to the actions of specific military units or individuals. Also, a network of roads has been built over parts of the battlefield to accommodate tourists. Today, automobiles and tour buses wend their way over places that the soldiers could reach only on foot or by horseback, over the crests of Little Round Top and Culp's Hill, through Devil's Den, along Seminary Ridge where the Confederate soldiers formed up for Pickett's Charge, and the length of Cemetery Ridge where the Rebel tide broke against the Army of the Potomac. At one time, there was even a road named Chamberlain Avenue that ran around the south face of Little Round Top, obliterating much of the area defended by the 20th Maine. The roadbed can still be seen today.

Before the coming of the automobile, getting around the battlefield was not easy. Tourists could walk, ride on horseback, or take a horse and buggy, and there were even some locals who rented themselves out as tour guides. The Gettysburg Battlefield Memorial Association, which oversaw the battlefield until the passage of the Gettysburg National Park legislation in 1895 (sponsored by our old friend Dan Sickles) had little power to stop commercial development on and around the battlefield. Graffiti and advertisements disfigured some of the huge rocks on Culp's Hill.

One of the most interesting, and most obtrusive, enterprises was the Gettysburg Electric Railway, also known as The Battlefield Trolley, which operated from 1893 to 1916. A car barn and power plant were built downtown, not far from the railway station so tourists could easily board there. Trolley tracks complete with electric wires strung on poles were installed running from downtown to Cemetery Hill, then south to Devil's Den. Although the trolley company promised to keep damage to the battlefield to a minimum, grading and leveling seriously altered the landscape in several locations.



A Gettysburg Electric Railway car passes by Devil's Den with Little Round Top in the background.

Near Devil's Den was a dance hall and saloon called Tipton Park, built by a co-owner of the trolley, William Tipton, who was also a well-known Gettysburg photographer.

For a time, the trolley shared some tracks with the Gettysburg-Harrisburg-Reading Rail Road, which ran diagonally across the fields of Pickett's Charge. Thankfully, like the Trolley, these railroad tracks are now gone.

The Trolley changed ownership several times and was plagued with problems throughout its years of operation. A number of accidents (collisions between trolley cars and with automobiles and even a horse and rider) resulted in lawsuits, plus there were continual legal disputes over taxes and other matters. The Trolley eventually fell into disrepair and closed in 1916, its demise hastened by the automobile.

Also contributing to the end of the trolley was the first eminent domain lawsuit to reach the Supreme Court, which held that the railway could be seized for historic preservation, which, in the words of the court, "seems a public use".

Today, one has to look closely to find traces of where the Trolley ran. Most consider it an abomination which will not be missed.

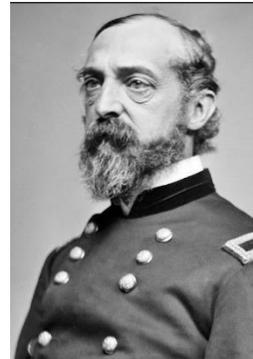
HANCOCK FOR PRESIDENT

Winfield Scott Hancock was one of the great heroes of Gettysburg, galloping all over the battlefield on the second day to move troops to wherever they were most needed to plug holes

in the Union lines. On the third day he was seriously wounded as he sat astride his horse on Cemetery Ridge during Pickett's Charge. In 1880 Hancock became the Democratic nominee for President. He lost to Ohioan James Garfield, another Civil War general, by what is still the closest popular vote margin in American history (less than 2,000 votes). Garfield served only 200 days before becoming the second US President to be assassinated.

GEORGE MEADE

General George Meade never got the appreciation he deserved for defeating Robert E. Lee at Gettysburg. Much of this was probably due to his letting Lee's army get away. Abraham Lincoln was dismayed when he heard Meade's proclamation that the "enemy has been driven from our soil" – to Lincoln, the whole country was "our soil". Lincoln went so far as to write a sharply critical letter to Meade, saying that "I do not believe you appreciate the magnitude of the misfortune involved in Lee's escape." But he dropped the letter into his desk drawer and never sent it.



General George Meade

Meade remained in command of the Army of the Potomac, but under the constant supervision of the General in Chief, Ulysses Grant. Meade was also dragged before the US Congress' Joint Committee on the Conduct of the War, where several Union officers made serious charges against him for his conduct of the battle. These included Dan Sickles, who still had many friends in Washington, and General Dan Butterfield, Meade's chief of staff at Gettysburg and strong a supporter of Joseph Hooker, Meade's predecessor. Meade probably didn't help matters with his blunt demeanor and lack of self-promotion. He stayed in the army after the war, and bitterly watched as men he felt were less deserving were promoted over him. He died an unhappy man in 1872.

ROBERT E. LEE

If anyone can be said to be noble in defeat, it can be said of Robert E. Lee. Although Gettysburg was not the crushing victory that Abraham Lincoln had hoped for, it was clear that the South had lost, and Lee's retreating army had been dealt a terrible blow. But even as his soldiers were streaming back from the failed Pickett's charge, Lee was passing among the men offering encouragement like "All this will come right in the end; we'll talk it over afterwards; but in the meantime, all good men must rally."

He may, as is often portrayed, or may not have told his men, "It is all my fault." But he certainly attempted to bolster morale and reassure the men that they had behaved bravely and that no blame could be placed on them. He probably summed up his own feelings when he told the British observer Arthur Freemantle, "This has been a sad day for us, Colonel – a sad day; but we can't expect always to gain victories."

He immediately went about preparing for a counterattack which never came. Once this was clear he effectively disengaged from the battle and moved south. He outmaneuvered George Meade and masterfully snuck his army over the Potomac River and into the safety of Virginia.

In his report of the battle, written immediately afterward, Lee refrained from assigning blame for the many things that went wrong for the Confederate forces. Instead, as always, he viewed things from a higher plain, stating in a personal letter to Jefferson Davis, "We must expect reverses, even defeats. They are sent to teach us wisdom and prudence, to call forth greater energies, and to prevent our falling into greater disasters." No wonder his men, and virtually every citizen of the South, loved him!

Lee also offered Davis his resignation, which the Confederate President wisely refused, knowing that there was not another general who could fill Lee's shoes.

Arguably, Lee's noblest moment, and his greatest service to both his beloved South and to the united country, came at Appomattox. After being slowly squeezed back into Petersburg and Richmond by the implacable Ulysses S. Grant, Lee finally started moving his army west in an attempt to join up with other Rebel forces and continue the fight. By the time he neared Appomattox Court House, he knew the end was inevitable. For several days he and Grant had exchanged notes exploring the possibility of surrender. Lee summoned his most trusted subordinate, James Longstreet and other officers, including E. Porter Alexander, Longstreet's artillery commander and, despite his age of only 29, a man to whom Lee listened. Alexander voiced the opinion shared by many in Lee's army: the Confederate soldiers should flee and continue the fight as guerillas, something that Jefferson Davis had already called for.

Lee was fully aware of the consequences of guerilla warfare, as were the Northern leaders. Lincoln had discussed this possibility with Grant and Sherman just a few weeks earlier, and they dreaded it. The partisan fighting in Missouri and "Bleeding Kansas" had shown both the effectiveness and the dreadfulness of this sort of warfare. All the normal rules, both formal and informal, had been tossed out, and it was war without mercy, waged against enemy soldiers and non-combatants alike. Most of the South was wilderness, with almost impenetrable forests, vast mountain ranges, and mysterious swamps from which a guerilla army could operate for years, if not decades.

Fighting like this was an abomination to an honorable, professional soldier like Lee. War was terrible enough when conducted with dignity between rule-bound soldiers, but was pure horror with no redeeming qualities when prosecuted by bloodthirsty outlaws. Lee also recognized that guerilla warfare would almost certainly lead the North to visit vastly greater retribution on the defeated South. Such were the considerations in the mind of the commander of the Army of Northern Virginia as he stood with his trusted generals around a campfire just east of Appomattox Court House. He knew that, as always, his army would do what he told them to do. Lee, ever loathe to quit, did not make his decision easily. He considered Alexander's advice to send his men to the hills, plus other options including a last-ditch defense, attempting to escape, even personally riding into the enemy so they would shoot him down. Finally, he told Alexander

that opting for guerilla war “would bring on a state of affairs it would take the country years to recover from.... You and I as Christian men have no right to consider only how this would affect us. [We must] consider its effect on the country as a whole.... And as for myself, you young fellows might go bushwhacking, but the only dignified course for me would be to go to General Grant and surrender myself and take the consequences for my acts.” The man who had so devotedly led the Confederate army would now spare the country from a guerilla war that he dreaded as much as Abraham Lincoln. He told his staff, “Then there is nothing left for me to do but to go and see General Grant, and I would rather die a thousand deaths.... It is our duty to live.”

The next day Lee met with Grant at Wilmer McLean’s house in Appomattox Court House. Grant’s surrender terms were surprisingly generous. Officers would be able to keep their side arms (a consideration both symbolic and practical). Artillerists and cavalymen who owned their horses (common in the Confederate army, but unheard of in the North) could take them home, presumably to work their farms. And most important, “each officer and man will be allowed to return to their homes, not to be disturbed by the United States Authority so long as they observe their parole and the laws in force where they may reside.” The rebel soldiers would not be considered prisoners of war and they would not be tried for treason. Grant had truly “let them down easy,” as Lincoln wished.



Lee surrenders to Grant in Wilmer McLean's parlor. Union officers confiscated many items, including the small table at which the two generals are seated.

To Grant’s terms Lee replied, “This will have the best possible effect upon the men. It will be very gratifying and will do much toward conciliating our people.”

As Lee rode back to where his army waited, his soldiers streamed to meet him and soon lined both sides of the road. They began to cheer the general, and tears welled up in Lee’s eyes. Soon everyone was weeping. Callused hands reached out to touch the beloved commander as he slowly passed by. When Lee reached his tent, a crowd of tearful soldiers waited for him. “Boys,” he told them, “I have done the best I could for you. My heart is too full to say more.”

Before he entered the tent he turned and spoke his final advice to the army that would be no more: “Go home now, and if you make as good citizens as you have soldiers, you will do well, and I shall always be proud of you.”

Despite the cordiality between Grant and Lee at Appomattox, there were many in the North who wanted Lee tried and hanged for treason. Ulysses Grant would have none of this, writing, “I will resign the command of the army rather than execute any order to arrest Lee.”

After the war, Lee pointedly refused to get involved in the vicious recriminations which occupied many of his former subordinate generals. Ever protective of their beloved leader, they would

brook no criticism, overt or implied, of his performance in any battle. James Longstreet incurred their ire when he claimed that Lee was not at his best at Gettysburg. Of course, Longstreet's friendship with U. S. Grant, his embracing of reconstruction and becoming a Republican, plus his rather abrasive way of presenting his opinions, did not endear him to many in the South. No wonder that no Gettysburg monument to Longstreet was erected until 1998. Even then it is a curious memorial, an equestrian statue at ground level rather than elevated on a pedestal, with a life-size rider on a four-fifths size horse. Maybe it pleases the Longstreet critics.

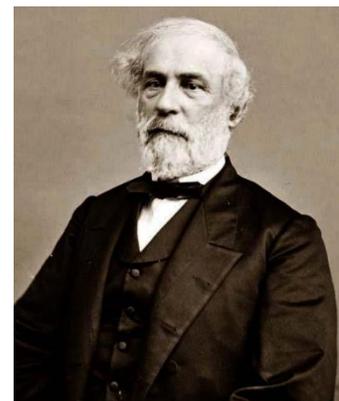


General James Longstreet statue on Seminary Ridge.

Robert E. Lee remained above all this. To the end of the war, he stuck with Longstreet, whom he called "my old war horse." After the war, he made no criticisms of his old corps commander. Lee never wrote his memoirs, preferring not to dwell on a war which had brought him much personal soul-wrenching. Offered several lucrative positions, he instead accepted the presidency of Washington College (now Washington and Lee University) in Lexington, Virginia. The students, as had his soldiers, revered him.

When he surrendered to Grant in April, 1865, Lee, like the rest of the Confederates, had signed a parole document (Union soldiers had worked day and night to print tens of thousands of these). In May, President Andrew Johnson issued a Proclamation of Amnesty and Pardon to those who had participated in the rebellion. Lee fell into one of the "exempted classes" of this proclamation and was required to submit a special application for amnesty to the President. This he did, and also signed an amnesty oath. But his pardon and restoration of citizenship were not forthcoming. It was not until 1970 that an archivist at the National Archives discovered the general's Amnesty Oath among some old State Department records, where they had lain for a hundred years. One wonders whether this was just a bureaucratic bungle, or an intentional attempt to deny Lee his citizenship, which was finally restored by act of Congress in 1975.

In spite of this and other chastisements, including having his house and property at Arlington, across the Potomac from Washington D.C., seized and turned into a cemetery for Union dead, for the remainder of his days Lee dedicated himself to setting an example for his fellow Southerners as they were reintegrated into the Union, just as he always set the example for his troops, his subordinate officers, and even for the cadets at West Point, where he had been Commandant for three years in the 1850's.

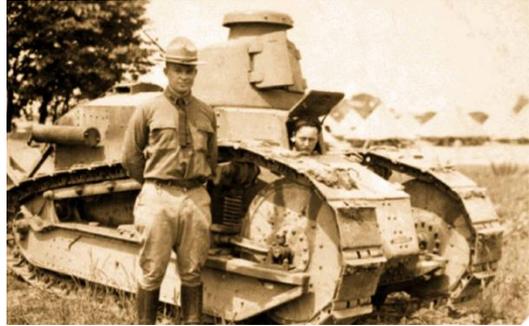


Robert E. Lee later in life.

Robert E. Lee lived just seven and one-half years after the war, dying at age 63 on October 12, 1870. The war years had taken their toll. He is buried underneath Lee Chapel at Washington and Lee University.

MILITARY ACTIVITY THROUGH THE YEARS

Gettysburg has other military connections besides the Civil War. In 1918, Camp Colt was established west of Emmitsburg Road for Tank Corps recruit training, and temporary barracks were constructed near the Codori house and barn; all under the command of Dwight Eisenhower. Ike was a captain and it was his first independent command. A marker along Emmitsburg road commemorates the camp. The US Marine Corp had a camp there in 1922, and in 1943 the Army established Camp Sharpe to conduct psychological warfare training prior to the Normandy invasion. From 1944 – 1946 a stockade for German POWs was built on the former Camp Colt site, housing over 500 prisoners who were used as local laborers.



Captain Eisenhower stands beside a Renault tank, with Camp Colt in the background.

REUNIONS

Within a few years of the battle, veterans began having reunions at Gettysburg. These were typically private celebrations conducted by a single brigade or regiment and often were held in conjunction with the dedications of regimental memorials. They were generally strictly Union affairs, since most Confederates saw no need to commemorate a defeat. As the years passed, a spirit of reconciliation swept much of the country, with greater emphasis on the commonality of being Americans rather than the differences between North and South.

In this frame of mind, the State of Pennsylvania established a commission to plan a celebration to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the battle in 1913. An invitation was sent to each state in the Union, North and South, to participate. Eventually, the US War Department was charged with building a camp at Gettysburg to house the veterans of the battle who were expected to attend. The camp, located on 280 acres between Emmitsburg Road and Seminary Ridge on the northern edge of the field where Pickett's Charge crossed, was a major project. There were 6,592 army-issue pyramid tents (eight veterans to a tent, with a cot, blankets, wash basin and mess kit for each); water and sewage systems, ninety latrines seating up to forty men, 173 kitchens, and five hospitals. A separate area was set up for each state, with Pennsylvania and New York being the largest. A Great Tent holding over 10,000 people was put up for regimental reunions, speeches and concerts.



The Great Camp for the 50th Reunion

Of the almost 54,000 vets who attended, 44,713 came from Northern states and 8,694 from former Confederate states. Their average age was 72, with the youngest being 61 and the oldest claiming to be 112. One of the centers of attention was former Union general Daniel Sickles, 94 years old and hobbling around on crutches and one leg.

One of the highlights of the reunion came on July 3rd. At 3:15 PM, 120 members of Pickett's Division Association fell into a line 50 feet south of the stone wall at the Angle on Cemetery Ridge. Fifty feet north of the wall stood 180 men of the Philadelphia Brigade Association (Webb's Brigade.) At a signal, a color guard from both sides moved forward with their battle flags and crossed the flag's staffs over the wall. Then a third color bearer ran forward carrying the stars and stripes and held it above the two battle flags. The groups of veterans from both sides advanced to the wall and embraced each other. It was a touching symbol of the spirit of reconciliation. That night a spectacular fireworks show was held on Little Round Top, attracting thousands from miles around.

The old veterans departed on July 4th and 5th, and by August 15th, the camp was entirely gone.

By the mid-1930s plans were being laid for a 75th anniversary reunion to take place in 1938. By that time, only about 12,000 Civil War veterans were still alive, and most were in their 90s. In total 1,359 Union and 486 Confederate veterans attended. Because of their advanced age, a private tent was provided for each vet and his attendant. Four hundred wheel chairs were on hand.

The highlight of the reunion was the July 3rd unveiling and dedication of the Eternal Light Peace Memorial on Oak Hill, overlooking McPherson's and Seminary Ridges, where the first day's fighting had taken place. Over 200,000 people turned out, and an estimated 100,000 more had to be turned away. President Franklin Roosevelt gave a dedication speech including the words "All of them we honor, not asking under which Flag they fought then – thankful that they stand together under one Flag now."



Tens of thousands await the unveiling of the Peace Memorial on Oak Hill.

On July 4th, the Army Air Corps staged an air show which included pursuit planes and B-17 bombers. To the old vets, the Civil War must have seemed like another world.

On a sad note, one veteran died during the reunion and six others died on the way home. The Gettysburg battlefield had claimed its last old soldiers.

Within a few years of both the 50th and 75th reunions, American boys would yet again be marching off to war.

THE GETTYSBURG NATIONAL TOWER

To many Civil War buffs, the greatest eyesore ever constructed on the battlefield was the Gettysburg National Tower, a 307-foot steel sightseeing tower erected on private property just south of Cemetery Hill. Of course, it stuck out like a sore thumb. The tower included an elevator to a revolving restaurant and observation deck affording an unparalleled view of the battlefield. Another benefit of the tower was that it served as a landmark – from anywhere on the field, you could tell where Cemetery Hill was (interestingly, during the battle, a 90 foot poplar tree not far from the site where the tower was later built served that same purpose; this tree appears in many photographs and paintings of the battlefield.) The tower lasted from 1974 – 2000, when it was seized under the power of eminent domain with \$3 million compensation to the owners. Historians, battlefield preservationists and other fans of the battlefield cheered as controlled explosions brought down the offensive tower on the 137th anniversary of Pickett’s charge.



The Tower looming over Cemetery Hill.

THE MOST RECENT REMAINS

In March 1997 a park ranger from Yellowstone National Park visited Gettysburg and discovered bones protruding from the bank of the famous Railroad Cut on McPherson Ridge. There was nothing to indicate whether the remains were those of a Rebel or a Yankee. Four months later the soldier was buried with full military honors in the Soldiers’ National Cemetery. Attending were two little old ladies in wheelchairs. They were Civil War widows. Both were in their nineties and had been married as teenagers in the 1920’s to elderly veterans. No one can say how many skeletons still remain on the battlefield.